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LEGENDS OF LIBERIA

COLLECTED BY

PETER PINNEY





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LEGENDS OF LIBERIA

A collection of Folktales told by the people of
Liberia and written down by Peter Pinney.

Dedicated to
WILLIAM V. S. TUBMAN,
President of the Republic of Liberia,
without whose unflagging interest, encouragement
and assistance this book would not have been written.

(Sgd.) Peter Pinney
(Tyd.) Peter Pinney

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THIS BOOK is essentially the work of the citizens of the Republic of Liberia. They told the myths and legends, and sometimes wrote them down, and the collected tales are the reward of their personal endeavour.

President William V. S. Tubman sponsored and encouraged the work, and to him special credit must be given. Credit must also be given to the teachers and students, Paramount and Clan Chiefs, Governmental Officials, missionaries and other public-spirited persons who so unselfishly contributed their time and energies towards the documentation of these selected stories.

The contents of this anthology have been meticulously revised, corrected and sometimes amplified by Honourable Oscar Norman and Honourable Varney Jakema Fahnbulleh of the Liberian Bureau of Folkways to ensure the maximum possible degree of accuracy. Particular attention has been paid by the Bureau of Folkways to tribal origins and historical legends.

{Sgd.} Peter Pinney
{Tyd.} Peter Pinney

ORIGIN OF AFRICAN PEOPLE

In the beginning God made men; and there is some argument among wise men as to where this remarkable event took place. Literal translation of early Biblical documents reveals that the first man and woman were made in God's likeness and lived in the Garden of Eden, which is thought to have been located in Mesopotamia, and some of their descendants called the Sons of Ham moved southwest to people Africa.

Many anthropologists offer a wider interpretation of the Biblical story, claiming that man developed in an evolutionary process from apes or ape-like beings, and probably originated either in Indonesia or South-east Africa or else developed in several places at the same time. However, this may be, it is known that the continent of Africa was peopled by four great waves of human beings.

The first wave consisted of pygmies, probably a honey-coloured race, who occupied the centre of the continent and lived by hunting and fishing. Their origin is wrapped in mystery and speculation.

The second wave was a race of hunting and fishing Negroes. The first evidence of this race appears in the East African Lakes region, but no one really knows where they came from. Scientists say they existed twenty thousand years ago, and either evolved in East Africa or came there

from Asia, through Arabia. These Negroes were a tall and virile race who drove the pygmies into refuge areas and spread throughout Central Africa. Migrating pygmies are thought to have reached the Guinea Coast, and legends tell of pygmies who once lived in Liberia. Few of these first Negroes followed them so far.

The third wave was inspired by the development of agriculture, nearly ten thousand years ago. The science of agriculture spread up the Nile Valley into East Africa to Negro tribes living there. With an assured supply of food these Negroes, now an agricultural people, rapidly increased in numbers and spread out, dominating and displacing their hunting-and-fishing brethren who were pushed onto mountainsides and into deep equatorial forests where their descendants may be found today. These agricultural Negroes established powerful kingdoms of a high social order in Ethiopia, the Congo, and the Guinea Coast. Here we have the first evidence of a strong and relatively advanced civilization with a well-ordered social system coming close to, and possibly into, Liberia.

The fourth wave of people were the Hamite invaders, who arrived in the Sudan via Egypt five or six thousand years ago. They were pastoralists and brought cattle with them, and mixed with the Negroes who had settled in the Sudan. The Negroes there accepted cattle and became ardent and accomplished pastoralists, spreading down through East Africa's grasslands

to the far south, and west on savannah lands below the Sahara Desert.

The hunting Negroes had dominated the pygmies; the agricultural Negroes displaced the hunting Negroes; now the pastoral Negroes mastered the agriculturalists.

The Sudanese cattlemen, a compound of Hamites and Negroes, did not rise to full power until twelve hundred years ago. At this time they became Moslems, and inspired by the teachings of the Prophet they swept all through the Sudan in a vast religious crusade; from these people arose the mighty Sudanic empires which existed between the ninth and nineteenth centuries.

ORIGIN OF LIBERIAN TRIBES

Before the explosion of the Sudanic empires the Guinea Coast was occupied (a) possibly by a few isolated groups of pygmies, (b) probably by some descendants of the hunting Negroes, and (c) certainly by various powerful kingdoms of people descended from the agricultural Negroes. Iron implements and shards of crude but tastefully decorated pottery found on Liberian hilltops indicate that this country was once inhabited by a hill people, but at the time of the Sudan's decline and fall this section of the coast was sparsely populated and this, no doubt, was one of the reasons why so many of the Sudanic and semi-Sudanic tribes came and settled here.

The Ghana empire dissolved in chaos in the eleventh century and resulted in the dislocation of various Sudanic peoples. The famous Negro kingdom of Mossi fell apart in the twelfth century. The mighty Mandingo empire was destroyed by Sonni Ali in the last half of the fifteenth century. The Songhay empire, which extended from Cape Verde to Lake Chad and north to the limit of the Sahara, was overthrown by three thousand renegade Spanish musketeers at the close of the sixteenth century, and the Sudan boiling pot began bubbling bloodily. Songhay was devastated by anarchy and unbridled butchery; the ~~Tuarreg~~ swept south into the midst of the melee and many tribes on the southern edges of the empire broke away. The Sudan is dependant on salt, and the natural movement was south and west to and through the abundance of the tropical rain-forests to the Guinea Coast.

The fabulous Fulani empire crumbled and fell in the eighteenth century, and the Bambara kingdom, south of Timbuctoo, was destroyed in the nineteenth century.

Fragmentation of all these militant empires at one time or another resulted in the displacement of many tribes. It would appear that as they moved south and west some of these tribes pressed against pure Negro tribes and in many cases absorbed them or were absorbed, forced them towards the coast, or fought their way through towards the sea. Of such were the people who came to Liberia: aggressive and warlike tribes of Hamitic and Negro blood who lived and died by the sword

and the spear--and muskets. They invaded this region of the Guinea Coast, as well as other regions, and in turn they either absorbed or killed such original inhabitants as may have existed then.

In the mountains and hills and lowlands various tribes met and clashed, asserted their claims to new land by sanguinary victory or were driven away in defeat, married or destroyed each other, and survived if they were fit: pressure groups arose and spread, and fell apart. Consequent upon this colourful chaos of ethnic confusion were the impacts of various cultures on one another, and out of all arose the stories, the legends, the myths; the refined wisdom and humour of vigorous warrior-tribes, the vast and fascinating unwritten literature, the disturbingly beautiful fragments of religion, drama, romance, comedy and tragedy, built in fanciful patterns on the common denominator of Man's experience and imagination...his desires, his fears, his most sacred beliefs.

THE SECOND EDITION

In the 1950's Peter Pinney came to Liberia from New Zealand to delve into the rich culture of the first African Republic. He carefully collected and compiled folktales and legends of the various tribal groupings throughout the country. These were mimeographed under the title "Legends of Liberia." Copies were distributed and little attention was thereafter given to the production.

Realizing the importance of conserving and developing Liberian literature, the Society of Liberian Authors decided to search for old manuscripts and publications during International Book Year, 1972. As a result a number were collected. Among them is Pinney's collection. The organization decided to reproduce the volume and make it available to the public. Hence, the Society of Liberian Authors is pleased to edit and produce this second edition of Legends of Liberia.

A. Doris Banks Henries
A. Doris Banks Henries
PRESIDENT, SOCIETY OF LIBERIAN AUTHORS

Monrovia, Liberia
1973

CHAPTER I THE BANDI

THE BANDI

Old Bandi myths refer to a large inland area of water as being the place of origin of the Bandi tribe, and state that the tribe came to Liberia from that point several centuries ago. Such legends would seem to allude to Lake Chad; but Paramount Chief Jallah of the Bandi describes the movement of the Bandi as having been generally southward from some undetermined point far north in what is now French territory. There is evidence that they did come from the north, forced by war or lured by hopes of salt and conquest.

Tribal legend says that Ngala (God) made the first of the Bandi in the form of a mighty chief called Yallowalla. Presumably Yallowalla had a wife, or wives, for he fathered a powerful son called Harlingi; Harlingi had many, many children, and these became the Bandi tribe.

When the Bandi tribe moved south much serious fighting was involved. The Kissis arrived before the Bandi, also from the north, and a terrible battle took place between the Kissi and the Bandi some time after the Bandi arrived. The dispute, Jallah alleges, developed in the following manner:

The Zoes, or medicine men of the Bandi, claimed that they possessed more power than anyone else within the tribe. The liars of the tribe said this was not true, and

when no one would believe them they decided they would demonstrate their powers. A liar went to the Kissi and told their chief that the Bandi were preparing to make war on them, and that they should gather a strong army to defend themselves. He then returned to the Bandi Chief and declared the Kissi were preparing a strong army to attack the Bandi: but a Bandi Zoe threw medicine on the liar and no one believed him.

The liar hurried off to an unknown neighbouring tribe and told their chief that the Kissi were preparing to attack them. The tribe sent spies and saw the Kissi preparing an army. The nameless tribe took the initiative and marched against the Kissi, and thus a great battle developed. All the Bandi Zoes pooled their powers but could not stop the fight; inevitably the Bandi tribe was drawn in, other tribes became involved, and finally so many warriors were killed that no one could think of anything better to do than go home, and no one knew what the fight had been about anyway.

The liars had proved their point, but had nearly destroyed their tribe.

TOAD, SNAIL, AND HORNBILL

D. Nguma

All the animals came together for a feast, and there was eating and dancing and drinking for a whole week. On the last evening of the feast three old men entered the town; and their names were Toad, Snail, and Hornbill. No one had ever seen people like them before, and no one knew where they came from; nor did any one know which of them was the eldest, so they were shown equal respect.

On the following day the Chief called all the animals together and asked them to elect a new Chief, as he himself was about to die. The animals were not happy to hear this, for they loved the old Chief and feared his place might be taken by some young fool who would show no respect to the wise old men. Everyone agreed that the oldest animal among ^{them} should be elected chief; and since Toad, Snail and Hornbill were the oldest people anyone had ever seen, it was decided the oldest one of these should be elected.

"I'll be the new Chief!" Toad croaked. "I'm the oldest, I'm the oldest!"

"I have lived since time began!" Snail declared.
"It is obvious that I'll be Chief."

"I was old before time was," said Hornbill; and none of the three could agree. The animals decided this important matter should be decided by a judge. The judge took his seat and demanded:

"Are you ready?"

"Goo!" cried the animals, which meant "We have been ready for some time." Toad, Snail and Hornbill stood up. Turning to Toad, the judge asked:

"Toad, can you tell us why you consider yourself older than Snail or Hornbill?"

Toad said: "I am so old I knew the world when it was pimples all over with little hills. Between the hills were holes where evil spirits dwelt, so that any living thing had to jump from hill to hill in order to avoid the spirit-holes. I was the only living thing, and that is how I learned to jump."

Everyone clapped, and said among themselves: Truly, he is the most ancient of animals and must be our Chief.

Snail's turn came, and he said:

"When the world was still a ball of soft mud, without hills or holes or anything else, no animal with legs could live. Only by sliding slowly on a slimy belly could one move, and that was how I moved, and still do. No other creature lived when I was young."

The animals cheered. "Here indeed is the oldest animal in the world," they said. "Snail must be our Chief!"

But then Hornbill raised a wing for silence, and announced:

Of a truth, I am much older than either Toad or Snail. I was born before the world began. There was no mud, no hill, no hole, and hornbills caught their food as they flew about the sky. And if a hornbill died he was buried in his beak, for there was no other place to bury him. So, look at my head! Do you not see my mother's coffin there?"

The fact was evident, and the animals clapped and cheered. Hornbill had proved himself the oldest creature in the world, and was appointed Chief.

WHY FRIDAY IS A HOLY DAY TO CERTAIN HEATHENS

J. Konteh

In a town called Yandohun there lived a chief called Yargai; and the people of Yandohun were heathens, while their neighbours were devout Mohammedans, known as Moli Men.

The Moli Men kept Friday as their holy day, and on this day they rested from their labours; but the heathens of Yandohun went about their affairs as usual. Now, the Chief of Yargai had been a wise and worthy man who had ruled the town with justice and good sense; before he died he bade his son guard the welfare of his people, and

render aid to those who needed aid.

But under the rule of Chief Yargai the prosperity and power of Yandohun declined: men gambled in the town, or slept, instead of tending crops; the rich grew lazy and the poor grew lean, and no one thought of helping the needy and infirm.

One day, which happened to be Friday, Chief Yargai sent his youngest son to bring palmwine from the forest; and when passing beneath a cottonwood tree the young lad heard a voice which said:

"O Tekawolo, hear us!"

Tekawolo looked up, and in the cottonwood tree he saw two snakes. He trembled with fear, knowing he was in the presence of some unnatural thing, but the voice went on:

"O Tekawolo, do not fear. We are the spirits of your father's parents, and being displeased with the rule of our son we command you to bear him this message: Tell him to remember the promises he made his father. Tell him to leave his idle ways, to govern the people, to plant new crops, and restore the honour and power of Yandohun. And tell him to fill the stomachs of the poor, and the aged, and the sick. Tell him to do these things, or he will die."

Tekawolo hurried off to Yandohun, his heart fluttering and his eyes big with fright. Running through the gates of Yandohun he fell in the midst of a group of gamblers, who shouted in anger and pushed him away; but now Tekawolo's

spirit fell, and so great was the fear inside him that his mouth was white and he dropped to the ground and groaned.

The gamblers called to his brother.

"O Boima! Bring kola nuts, for Tekawolo eats his tongue and is near to death!"

Boima brought two kola nuts. Tekawolo ate the two nuts and became calmer. Many people gathered. When he could speak he told his remarkable tale to the assembled townsfolk, so that they too grew nervous, and then he reported to his father, Chief Yargai. The Chief was filled with the wonder of this day, and set about restoring honour and prosperity to his lands and town: and since this singular day had chanced to be Friday, it was decreed that Fridays would in future be observed as holy days.

This is why the heathens of Yandohun, to this time, work diligently for six days of the week, but rest on Fridays and give honour to their ancestral spirits.

HOW PRIDE DESTROYED A BEGGAR

D. Nguma

Masa was a beggar who had no family or land; he begged food when he could, and when he could not he hired himself to labour in the fields of other men. One day when

bearing a heavy bag of cassava to a distant town an overpowering weariness possessed him and he sat to rest beneath a tree. He fell asleep.

He slept for seven months, and since he was a poor and unimportant man no one came to look for him. As he slept he dreamed a dream in which he entered a great city, and here he met a fair maiden called Vona. The two young people fell in love, and Masa agreed to marry Vona as soon as she had been accepted into the Sande Society. She was to be called to this important women's society within two months.

Now, Masa faced a serious problem, for he had no presents to give the girl or her mother. Since begging brought no wealth and animals abounded outside the city walls, he decided to turn trapper to secure both food for himself and skins for trade. He made fifty traps and set them in the forest.

Near the first trap lay a large black rock, and when Masa came to collect the animals in his traps the spirit of the black rock said:

"Every animal in your traps must be placed upon my head, or I will rise and swallow you!"

Masa was astonished to hear the rock talk thus, and being fearful of the threat he placed his animals upon its head. The animals disappeared within the rock. He shifted his traps to another place, but next day the

rock had moved there too, and again demanded and received all the animals in Masa's traps. This went on for many days. No matter where he put his traps, the rock was sure to follow. Masa had no animals to take home, and Vona's mother became angry.

"O worthless hunter!" she exclaimed one day. "Do you hunt animals, or do they hunt you? You ask to wed my daughter, yet you bring no gifts. You wish to have her as your wife, yet you cannot feed yourself. I will not have my daughter marry such a poor and worthless fool."

Masa and Vona grieved at this, for they loved each other dearly.

On the evening before the ceremonies of the Sande Society Masa went once more into the forest, though his heart was heavy inside him. His traps were empty, for he had shared all the animals in the forest and had been obliged to give them to the spirit of the black rock. In despair he sat down on the rock himself, hoping the spirit might devour him too. But the black rock said to him:

"O hunter, for a month and more you have given me every animal you caught, and now I shall reward you for your labours. Beat me seven times with your stick."

Masa took his stick and hit the black rock seven times. The rock opened, and out rolled seven heavy stones of gold--so heavy that he could scarcely lift the smallest. He was

happy to see them, and thanked the spirit of the rock. He left his traps, hid six stones of gold and carried the seventh into the city. Here he purchased the richest gowns and jewels, white horses and fine gifts, and attended by dancers and musicians he rode in glory through the streets to the dwelling of the maiden city. Here he purchased the richest gowns and jewels, white horses and fine gifts, and attended by dancers and musicians he rode in glory through the streets to the dwelling and her mother; and people marvelled among themselves to see the lowly beggar riding like a king.

So Masa married his beloved, and days of feasting followed. Two months of his dream had passed. He and his bride lived in a palace with honour and wealth and unaccustomed happiness, but as time passed and Masa learned the power of his wealth he grew arrogant, as well as fat, and dealt harshly with his servants. Then he fell ill with a strange illness. The most famous diviner in the city came, and after reading sands he said:

"A bag of cassava weighs heavily on your spirit. Eat no more cassava, or your spirit's strength will break."

Masa ate no more cassava, and soon grew well, but he became so cruel and haughty that his servants came to hate him and one day they put cassava in his food. Masa ate the meal; and he had barely finished when there was a loud hollow noise and he completely disappeared. He who was

rich and lived in a palace with the loveliest of wives was swallowed by the air.

The dream had broken.

Masa woke up underneath the tree deep in the forest. His loincloth was rotten, pigs had long ago eaten his bagful of cassava, his body was dirty and his hair was the home of insects. He had returned to poverty and in poverty he remained, for he had destroyed his fortune with arrogance and pride.

THE POWER OF THIEVES AND LIARS

P. Korvah

The Chief Thief and the Prince of Liars lived together in a house, and neither could agree which possessed the greatest power for causing mischief. They decided they would have a competition, and Thief set out to do his best, or worst.

He entered a prosperous town by night, a town with many jewels, carried off chickens and clothes and food, drove off the cattle and goats and sheep, took all the totems and kidnapped the Chief's favourite wife.

What palaver there was in the morning! Women arose to light fires and raised the alarm instead: their hus-

bands seized spears and rushed through the town seeking culprits and shouting excitedly; the Chief called for his wife, and his pipe, and his sword, but all had mysteriously disappeared.

Thief laughed and laughed, and went home to liar.

"Is that all you can do?" asked Liar. "Can you only cause confusion in the town? Well, now I'll show you what the Prince of Liars can do!"

He went to a place where two great towns lay close together; they were ruled by powerful chiefs called Saa and Numa. In one of these towns he befriended the wife of Chief Saa. This woman often quarrelled with her husband, who was cruel, and Liar confided to her that he had magic powers which could make her husband respect and love her, and cause him to agree with anything which she suggested. The woman was delighted to hear this.

"I know a certain medicine," said Liar, "which will make your husband love you as he never loved before. But to make this medicine I must have some hair cut from his belly."

He urged the woman to take a knife and cut hair from her husband while he slept, and she agreed to do this that very night.

Liar approached Chief Saa, the woman's husband, and to him he said:

"O Chief, I heard the women talking, and I know your wife is planning to murder you tonight. Take care, and watch her closely lest you die!"

Chief Saa was surprised to hear this, and decided to wait and see if Liar's words were true. Chief Saa's wife was the sister of Chief Numa, who ruled the neighbouring town, and now Liar went and talked with this second chief.

"Chief Numa," he said, "your sister is married to Chief Saa, and Chief Saa intends to murder her tonight. Send guards in secret, after dark, so that your sister may have aid if she should need it."

Chief Numa frowned in wonder when he heard this; for if his sister was thus murdered the two great towns would go to war. He sent guards secretly to hide by Chief Saa's house. That night Chief Saa and his wife lay down on their bed to sleep; and when she thought her husband slept she took a long, sharp knife from underneath the bed. But the Chief was not asleep and he saw the long blade gleaming.

She began to cut hair from his tender belly.

"Warrgh!" he cried. "Fiend!"

He swept her hand aside, and as the blade slashed her leg she shrieked in pain. Chief Numa's guards became alarmed and beat upon the door. Chief Saa's own soldiers came. Fighting broke out. A courier ran to Numa; and he assembled his men and rushed headlong into

battle with the warriors of Saa.

A violent battle ensued and lasted for seven days and nights. Both of the towns were burned and the women and children killed. Other tribes entered the fight and heavy slaughter followed until all villages and towns were burned and the land was ravaged, dead, and smelled of blood.

Thieves can steal plunder, but the wickedness of liars knows no end.

THE MAN WHO SCORNED SPIRITS

W. Dennis

Near to a town there was a small area of bushland which, the people said, was the private property of the forest spirits. A man decided he would make his farm on this land, and only laughed when his friends begged him not to. He had no respect for either spirits or the opinions of other people.

On the first day he cut some bushes and went home. Next morning he found all the other bushes had been cut. He felled a tree and on the third day he discovered all the other trees had been felled.

"I am the happiest and luckiest of men," he thought; "I won't have to work hard this year, for the forest

spirits are my slaves.

He lit a small fire and went home. During the night all the bushes, trees and stumps were burned. In the morning he told his wife to plant one seed of rice, and leave a basket of rice grain there overnight. During the night the seed was planted throughout the field.

At harvest time he cut one stalk of rice, and then went home already counting the profits he would make. But when he returned in the morning he found all the rice crop had been harvested--and taken away. His crop had disappeared.

Which proves the people as a group are wiser than any single man.

HOW TIME BEGAN

This is an interesting myth illustrating the Bandi's conception of life and its social problems when the world was very young.

Ngala made the world and the moon and the sun. The sun shone all the time, so that there was no night, for Ngala considered that constant light would benefit men and beasts. For every man there was a woman, and all mankind was black. There were no white or brown or yellow people, there was only a single race of noble and pure-

black men. In those days men and animals were friends and wandered freely in the forests eating fruit and nuts and green things; caves and houses were not needed, for when a man or a beast was tired he lay down where he was to sleep. Men possessed no spears and animals had no claws, for no flesh was ever eaten.

Little children left their parents whenever they pleased, and wandered for months and years in foreign places; and this was a source of worry and grief to men and animals, for they loved their children well. Sometimes children wandered away and were never seen again; mothers and fathers wept in sorrow and invoked Ngala's aid.

Ngala then withdrew the sun, and all the men and animals were alarmed. They could not understand what darkness was. Families grouped together in defence against unknown terrors, and children roaming far afield called pitifully for their parents.

After a time Ngala caused the sun to shine again, and everyone was happy; children returning home began to wander about again, so Ngala divided Time into nights and days to encourage the little ones to go back home and not stray too far from their parents. In common protection against the night men and animals united in a single friendly plan and lived together under a giant cotton tree; they all lived there because there was no other shelter. They took good care of the tree for it was the only home they had.

All the animals and men loved one another.

One day the son of Man discovered a piece of fire discarded by Lightning Bug, and he played with it. Being a normal child with mischief in his heart he waited until no one was watching, then carried fire to the foot of the cotton tree--and when animals and men saw and smelled the smoke the giant tree was already well alight. A great cry of despair arose among the animals, and they stood about in fear, helplessly watching fire consume their home in a roaring, smoking blaze. After many hours the tree groaned, and cracked, and came crashing down to earth amid a shower of bright red sparks.

Men and animals fled in all directions.

"It is finished!" cried the animals. "We have been betrayed by Man. We had agreed to live in peace beneath the cotton tree but it is not good to stay any longer with wicked man. There is war between us!"

Most of the animals fled far into the forests and made their homes in caves and thickets; men built houses and a few brave or foolish animals decided to live with them--such as dogs, goats, and cows. They built houses of mud and thatch and their tribe multiplied.

On the other side of a mountain there was a certain pond which Ngala had used as a bowl for his colours when he painted animals. The remains of the colours had settled to the bottom of the pond and the water looked

clear and sweet. A group of naughty children who had strayed far from their homes found the pond and joyfully ran to bathe but their swimming and splashing stirred up Ngala's colours and the children were astonished to see their skins change colour from lustrous black to white, brown and yellow. In great alarm they rushed from the pond and washed themselves in a stream, but the colours were fixed and would not be washed off.

When the children went back home their people thought they were bewitched and made them leave the tribe. The children travelled far away and made their homes in distant lands and such was the beginning of the coloured races of the world.

THE ORIGIN OF THE WUBOMAI

Condensed from reports made by Paul Korvah and Mr. S. Atkinson, the sequence of this legend has suffered damage while in transit through many generations and does not explain how a Bandi clan became part of the Loma tribe.

In olden times there was a mighty Bandi chief called Fonilama; he was the richest and most powerful man in all the region of Halipo, and although his family name was Halingi he was head of the Tahamba

Clan. Halipo was a large town which now lies close to Kolahun, Government Headquarters of the Kolahun District in the Western Province.

Fonikgema's clan made war-palaver with the Kissis. A cruel conflict ensued in which the very rocks were shattered and trees were torn from the ground and used as clubs. When the battle was over, Fonikgema discovered he had captured a beautiful Kissi maiden whose name was Kumba; she was a gentle and sweet-natured lady of high quality and he took her as wife. He already had five sons by his Bandi wives, but Kumba gave him two more sons called Fala Wubo and Seimavile Halingi.

The seven sons grew to manhood. The five sons of Fonikgema's Bandi wives took many women to themselves and each began to form a new clan; but Fala Wubo and Seimavile were the sons of a slave-woman, and therefore could not inherit either power or property; and the proud Bandi people whispered against them.

Fala Wubo was an accomplished warrior, hunter and blacksmith; he had married and sired two sons, but was not the man to submit for long to social discrimination. He decided to find new lands where he and Seimavile Halingi could live in freedom and found new clans. He fared abroad beyond the limits of Bandi territory, and climbing a tall mountain he saw fertile hills and valleys reaching as far as the eye could see.

"Kanikokoi!" he cried, which means 'Rejoice!', and thus was the mountain named. He fell to wondering who possessed these lands, and if he could gain some for himself by treaty or by war. He went home to report to his brother Kap-wild; together they consulted a Moli man or Mohammedan called Famoiya, who was the best diviner in Malina. Famoiya consulted his magic sands, and eventually he said:

"Your children will be honoured and will bring great power and fame to your clans on one condition: two of your finest warriors must be presented to the chief of the lands you saw."

Thus the wily Famoiya avoided a direct answer, as the best diviners will; but he did volunteer to go along to this distant land, beyond Kanikokoi Mountain, and discovered the inhabitants were a tribe of giants from eight to nine feet in height, who called themselves Wono. Their arms were as thick as oranges; their principal weapons were bows and arrows, and hair of their heads was never cut. In all, they had a fierce and dreadful appearance.

Famoiya courageously made his way to the main town of the Wonos, a large and well-fortified town called Sityana and presented himself at the house of the Chief. The Chief was away hunting. This was a fortunate thing for the diviner, for the Wono Chief had no respect for strangers and was accustomed to putting

them in a pot with potato greens, but Famoiya met the wife of the Chief as she was coming from her bath. He politely greeted her and announced:

"I belong to a distant tribe, and come to your land bearing messages of peace, goodwill, and friendship. My big men ask me to give you these fine cloths that our honourable intentions may be known and respected."

The woman took the cloths and felt and fingered them with growing wonder and delight; for cloth was quite unknown to the Wonos. She had no wish to kill a man who could bring such splendid gifts, and said:

"My husband will be coming soon; but he eats strangers, so hide out back in the woodpile and I will see what I can do."

Famoiya concealed himself and soon the Wono Chief appeared. He was a powerful giant nine feet high. His wife told him of the Mandingo stranger who brought presents from Halipo, but the savage giant fell into a rage, ground his teeth till chips flew and declared that strangers were not welcome in his land. Particularly those who come with gifts--for it was such as they who plotted to overthrow honest chiefs.

The diviner managed to slip away, and returned to Fala Wubo and Seimavile Halingi. Since the Wono Chief had violated the universal law called Zei, which held that ambassadors of peace must be respected, the brothers now felt justified in making war upon the Wonos. They assembled

A strong army, and with Famoiya as their priest they sacrificed a bull and marched against the giants.

They were driven back. Time and again they joined battle with the Wanos, but the giants always drove them back.

At the insistence of Fala Wubo's sons the army was divided into two: and the sons, Wolobala and Kezi-zilema went to the right to beseech the Wanos from their town, while Wolobala went left through G. Lari and managed to reach the very gates of Titiyama. He had been warned not to attack if the defences were too strong, but being young and impetuous and anxious for glory he boldly led his men against a formidable garrison of giants.

He suffered severe defeat. The place of slaughter has been known ever since as 'Koiwolomai', or the Place of Crushed Meggots. The greatest warrior who fell was Valamuza; his skull is worshipped to this day.

Famoiya now dreamed a dream which revealed that a great sacrifice must be made before victory could be won. He told Fala Wubo to catch an elephant alive and sacrifice it after appropriate rituals had been performed.

This was considered impossible to do. Famoiya went on to say that if an elephant could not be had, then some man must volunteer to take its place. Seimavile Halingi at once came forward and offered himself as a living sacrifice: but Fala Wubo loved his brother well, and would not hear of it. Seimavile insisted; Fala Wubo would not hear him.

At that moment there came news that a Wono expeditionary force was advancing through the High Forests towards a town called Da-azu, on the French side of the border. Fala Wubo decided one final onslaught must be made. Rapidly the two intrepid brothers regrouped the battered remnants of their army, called for volunteers from neighbouring tribes and hired the services of the most famous warriors in the land. Their army was now more powerful than it ever had been before. They marched to Da-azu, and launched a determined and vicious assault on the Wono force: and soon the over-confident Wonos found they were fighting a desperate rear-guard action which brought them to the mouth of an enormous cave.

Out-numbered, outfought, and suffering heavy loss, the Wonos sought refuge deep inside the cave; and the victors massed outside wondering how the remaining giants might be slain or enslaved. Fala Wubo and Sainavile appealed to their priest, Famoiya, to discover some solution. Realizing that equivocation would no longer serve his purpose, Famoiya sought the aid of two of his followers, Faubela and Fandawulo, and they made powerful medicine and threw it on a gourd of sand, and placed the gourd at the mouth of the cave.

The sand immediately turned into a horde of big black driver ants which streamed into the cave and bit the giants. Some giants were eaten, others were driven

ned with pain and rushed forth from the cave. Most of them were killed or captured, but a few fought free and fled back to Bitiyem.

There remained one bloody battle to fight before the glans could be decisively defeated: this was the battle for Bitiyem, where all the remaining Wonos were assembling to defend their central town against the persistent attacks of the invaders. It now became essential to sacrifice an elephant, or some human valiant; and Seimavile Halingi came forward again and declared he was willing to die for the sake of his descendants and those of Fala Wubo.

Fala Wubo, with considerable reluctance, now found himself obliged to accept his brother's offer; defeat at this time would be a permanent disaster. The two brothers returned with their army to Halipo, and there Seimavile's friends and relatives assembled. He was to be buried alive, and the burial was to take place on a Friday. Seimavile sat alone in a house until the fatal day, with no company other than the rich foods which people sent him.

The burial hole was dug and Seimavile was brought forth. Fala Wubo, Seimavile and Famoiya each cut one finger and trickled their blood into a Mandingo ink vessel; using this blood, Famoiya wrote certain promises and agreements which as-

sured the safety, prosperity and honour of Seimavile Halingi's people. This written document was wrapped up and placed inside a pouch to be preserved as a charm. It was, and still is, kept by the oldest of Famoiya's living descendants. It is called Famoiya, and is kept today by a man called Mbangua.

Seimavile's brothers did not stay to witness his sacrifice. Seven arrows were aimed at his body and fired. He was lowered into the grave. Food was placed in there with him. The grave was sealed by a plank hewn by cutlasses, and a brass bucket was placed at the head. For seven days Seimavile Halingi lay in the hole crying in agony; and then died.

Fala Wubo meanwhile led his army against the fortified town of Bitiyema. His initial attack was strong and well-planned, and his warriors surged forward with fierce determination. They broke or overflowed the outer defences of the town. In a series of swift and savage thrusts they pressed in with hacking swords and stabbing spears; and the twang of the Wonos' bowstrings sang a song of sudden death. The battle raged day after day until bodies were piled on bodies and the very winds cried out against such carnage.

The Bitiye creek ran red with blood for twenty days.

The Wono were defeated and destroyed. Those few who managed to escape sought refuge on a mountain top and grieved for their slain tribe. This mountain is

now called Wologizi, the House of Mourning.

They would the long way for possession of this land; Fala Wubo became the chief of all the Womo lands, and the clan which sprang from his loins are called the Wubomai. Even that time no enemy has ever conquered the Tahamba Clan, from which Seimavile Halingi and Fala Wubo came; Seimavile's descendants live in Halipo, and for a long time after his death they used to occasionally sacrifice a black bull beside his grave. A certain tree grew over the grave, and together with any sacrificial bull would serve as an oracle. An important question would be asked the bull, and if it ate leaves from the tree the answer would be 'yes'. If, when the bull was killed and carved up for consumption, a traitor to the clan ate any of its meat, the food would be as razors in his stomach.

The custom of sacrificing bulls beside Seimavile Halingi's grave has died; the grave is overgrown and neglected. Mbagua, who keeps the Fanoiya (the document written in blood before Seimavile's death) says that in the old days it took a chief or any augury to begin a war, but now all men listen to what the Government says. Even the inviolability of Seimavile Halingi's family is no longer in force, and the promises men made to him have been forgotten.

The Liberian Bureau of Folkways adds an interesting footnote to this legend, offering several suggestions which may serve to guide the story along more authentic lines:

Falingama (Fonikgema) was a warrior of unusual fortitude who was born in distant Mecca of a man called Adama and a woman named Mawah. Having become famous in his own land he decided to carry his sword to foreign fields, and set out to seek a certain mountain called Mamanda; travellers from the African Sudan had told him this was a fertile and well-watered place where a man with power and initiative could establish a prosperous chiefdom.

With his followers he journeyed west, and having travelled a great distance he met and fought a warlike tribe who called themselves the Kissi. Through this encounter he won himself a beautiful Kissi woman called Finda, and she bore him a son called Fala. Falingama settled at a town which men knew as Torlikollor, and Fala, who was his youngest son, surpassed his brothers in the warlike skills demanded of those times: the young warrior became known as Fala the Conquerer, or Fala-kruba, which the years corrupted to Fala-wuba.

Falingama died and was succeeded by Fala-kruba, who continued to extend his father's chiefdom; when he was old he had advanced as far as a town called Tolluzalazu, and at this place early one clear morning

he saw a distant mountain-top now known as Woonsawa. And seeing it, he exclaimed:

"Indeed, I may still be a child and develop into manhood, but so old am I now I can never again grow again to manhood."

His children asked what he meant, and he explained:

"Ah, my children, if I could become young again and possess my former strength I would not rest until I reached your Fala-wuba mountain; and there I would build my town."

His children then vowed they would build him a town under that very mountain, even if he died before he reached it. But Fala-wuba did die before he reached that place, but in dying he declared that if the promised town was built his spirit would certainly dwell within the mountain. His children built a town in the appointed place and called it Setoyama, and it is still believed that Fala-wuba's spirit lives nearby in Woonsawa Mountain to this day: and the area around it is known as Wubamai.

The Wubamai people used to honour Fala-wuba with human sacrifices, but with the coming of 'Merican-palaver' and Government influence, the practice of sacrificing humans was abolished, and in these more enlightened times a black cow is offered.

HOW TWO RICH MAIDENS SOUGHT A NAKED MAN

Clan Chief Kaifa Konneh, Waoma Clan

Long ago, beyond the memories of humble men, there was a rich and powerful chief who had a son. The old chief did not know Ngala, and as he lay dying he saw famine and disease and war break up his powerful chiefdom.

The son of the chief found himself with no possessions, and though a proud and valorous man he was obliged to rob, and lived by the edge of his sword. The enemies who held his lands called him Nyani, which means poor. Nyani had no clothes, and therefore he was naked; he lived in a hollow tree and was so strong and fierce that people avoided him.

Far to the north there dwelt a wealthy chief who had a lovely daughter; she was so beautiful that flowers reached out to touch her as she passed.

Far to the south there lived another chief whose only daughter was as fair as the midnight moon--so beautiful that even the forest trees adored her.

Both of these two maidens grew weary of men who praised them with carefully polished words: for flattery comes easily to rich men who seek rich wives. It chanced that these two maidens, who lived very far apart, heard about the fierce but proud Nyani, and each decided to marry him.

One maiden travelled south, the other journeyed north, and each took a thousand warriors and slaves who carried riches. The maiden from the south arrived and asked people

where Nyani lived.

"He lives in your hollow tree," they said, and marvelled that such a maiden should interest herself. But Nyani was not in the hollow tree; he had gone to look for food.

She summoned five hundred warriors and said:

"Find this man Nyani, and bring him here."

"How will we know him from other men?"

"He has no clothes," she said.

Five hundred warriors marched on the nearby town to hunt for naked men. They seized men bathing, men undressing, men who lay with wives; the town was in an uproar as warriors dragged men from the river. They found and bound a hundred naked men--and then the maiden from the north arrived.

She took five hundred slaves with food and clothes and riches and went looking in the town for Nyani; and when she saw the warriors with a hundred naked men she asked:

"Which among you is Nyani?"

Nyani was struggling fiercely with twenty warriors. The maiden commanded her slaves to set food before the warriors, and Nyani was released. She persuaded him to bathe in the river, and then she rubbed sweet-smelling ointments on his body and gave him food and wine in golden bowls.

The maiden from the south appeared. She bore robes of gold and silver thread, precious jewels and perfumes, and with these she dressed Nyani, who stood silent and frowning at each of them in turn.

"Nyani, you are mine," said one. "I found you and have dressed you, and I must be your wife. I kiss your feet." She kissed his feet.

Nyani frowned a mighty frown.

"Silence!" he thundered. "I'll have no quarreling. I'll marry both of you!"

They loved him for his honest manliness, and they loved him equally. But which of them had the right to be first wife?

HOW SPIDER ROBBED A GOBLIN AND CHEATED DEATH

M. Dennis

During hungry season Hare discovered a Goblin's home in a secret place beyond the forest, and in Goblin's house were many boxes full of rice.

When Goblin was away cunning Hare crept into the house, opened a box, and filled a bag with rice. As he was about to leave a bat flew down from under the roof and said:

"Hare, you are stealing Goblin's rice!"

"So I am," said Hare. "Would you like some too?"

Bat was the guardian of Goblin's rice. He never stole any rice himself because he could not open the boxes, and now, because he was hungry, he replied:

"Yes, I would like some. Fill this bowl for me."

Hare filled the bowl and went away, and Bat did not tell Goblin. Hare was a generous animal, and gave some of

his rice to Spider. Spider ate greedily, and then inquired:

"Glover Hare, where did you get this rice?"

"In a Goblin's house," said Hare,

"Let us go and get some more!"

"Tomorrow. We will leave when the first cock crows."

Spider did not sleep that night, and spent all his time counting the windows of rice he would steal. Every time he counted up to nine he would have to begin all over again, for Spider can only count to nine. His greed made him so anxious that at midnight he climbed to the top of Hare's house and sang the rooster's song. Then he went down and knocked on Hare's door.

"Oh Hare, let us go now. The first cock has crowed."

"Go away, Spider, and sleep," said Hare. "I know it was you who crowed. We will leave when the women get up to carry water."

Spider went away and began counting up to nine again. After a while he got two buckets and loudly banged them together, and said in a woman's voice:

"Oh well, I suppose we had better go and fetch water now." Then he knocked on Hare's door again and said:

"Oh Hare, let us go now. The women are going to fetch water."

Hare was angry and said something rude. But he could not sleep any more, so he got up and went off with Spider through the forest to Goblin's house. They had to wait for an hour before Goblin went off to his fields; then they crept inside

his house and opened a box of rice. Spider had brought an enormous kinjah, and now he rammed and crammed as much rice into it as he could, and stuffed his stomach as tightly as he could. Hare did not take so much.

Bat flew down and said to Spider:

"Let me have a little rice."

"I'll let you have nothing," said greedy Spider. "Go away."

"I only want small-small," pleaded the little animal.

"Even bats must eat."

"Spiders must eat too. Go away!"

Hare filled Bat's bowl with rice. But as Spider and Hare were leaving Bat flew to Spider's big kinjah and quietly climbed inside; and he began to eat Spider's rice. Spider's kinjah was so heavy that he took all day to reach his home, and all the time Bat was eating, eating, eating. He began at the bottom and ate his way upwards, leaving behind him a pile of dung, and when Spider reached his house very little rice was left.

He staggered wearily into his house and set the kinjah down.

"Wife!" he cried. "Children! Come and see what your clever father brings."

Spider was feeling very proud, but he was also tired and ravenous with hunger. His wife and children came. He opened the kinjah and gave them a little rice, deciding he would eat the rest himself. But when he put his hand inside the kinjah

to get rice for himself he found only a great quantity of dung; and Bat flew out laughing and squeaking.

Spider started in amazement. He emptied the kinjah on the floor, but only dung was left inside. He seized the biggest knife he had and hunted Bat all around the room. Bat settled on the branch of Spider's wife. Spider was crazy with anger. He savagely struck at Bat, but Bat flew off and Spider cut his wife in two.

Spider was arrested by the Chief for wife-killing, which was not allowed, and a council was held to decide whether Spider would be drowned in the river or burned alive.

"Please burn me!" Spider begged. "Drowning in deep water is a terrible affair. In fire I'll turn to smoke and float up in the air.

Of course, when they heard these words, the Council immediately decided that Spider should be drowned; they took him to the river bank and there they threw him in. Spider landed lightly on the water and ran to the other side.

"Fooly fools!" he cried. "Fire would surely cause my end, but water is a Spider's friend!"

Ever since that day men have hunted Spider with sticks pulled from the fire.

Proverb: "Ashes fall on those who throw them!"

THE BABY STAR WHO VISITED A FISH
Clan Chief Watson, Yawuahun Clan

A baby star came down from the heavens one night to bathe in a pond of sweet water. A little fish was swimming about in the pond, looking here and there for things to eat. He was surprised when he found the star bathing in the pond, but he politely greeted the visitor and asked:

"O Star, my pond is a small and unimportant pond. Why did you choose to come here?"

"No special reason," said the Star. "The water here is clear and sweet, and I am only a baby star." And then, thinking the fish was a simpleton, he added: "Tell me, will the moon bathe in the sea tonight?"

"I will tell you," answered the little fish, "But first you must tell me why one of my crabs lives with a water-snail?"

The Baby Star laughed at such foolishness.

"How stupid you are," he said. "I live up in the sky. What could I know of such things?"

"And you are two fools," the Little Fish declared; "for I live in this pond, and what could I know of the sky, or the moon, or if she will bathe in the sea tonight?"

The Little Star blushed with shame and flew away. Wise men treat strangers with respect, and save themselves much trouble.

THE MAN WHO SOUGHT RICHES AND RESPECT

S. F. Kimba

A certain poor hunter searched in the forest for many years trying to find his fortune; but all he found was birds and animals and fruit. He went to a diviner and asked what he must do in order to become rich and well-loved by his people. The diviner said:

"Bring a leopard into the village market place, and then report to me."

The hunter went away wondering how this thing might be arranged. He could not use his spear, or even traps, for a leopard in a trap fought to escape and always hurt itself. And even if he caught an unharmed leopard, it seemed unlikely that the animal would willingly come to the village. The hunter thought and thought for several days; then he went out in search of leopards, and finally he found the one he sought. It was a female leopard, and she had three kittens which she guarded in a cave.

The hunter killed a deer, and left deermeat by the cave. On the following day he did the same; each day for twenty days he left meat in front of the leopard's cave until the leopard learned to wait for him, and to greet him as a friend.

On the twenty-first day the hunter brought more meat and sat down by the cave as if to rest. He had left his spear in the forest. The leopard entered the cave and brought out her three babies, and together they ate the deermeat as the hunter watched and smiled.

In time the hunter was accepted by the leopard family as both playmate and companion. They grew to love his kindness no less than they loved his meat; and indeed, the hunter learned to love them too. Sometimes he took the babies for a walk, or romped with them among the trees, and their mother trusted him to bring them back. And thus it was that the hunter took one baby away among the trees, then further, and further yet, and carried the little animal towards his village. The baby leopard trusted him, and was happy and excited to be travelling so far. It was not afraid of the village people, for the only man it knew had been a gentle friend.

The hunter showed the baby leopard to the diviner, and explained what he had done.

"Hunter," said the wise old man, "you have done well, and even better. Let my judgment be your guide: be as kind, considerate and gentle to your fellow men as you have been to your wild leopards, and not only will riches come to you, but men will learn to love you and respect you as their friend.

The hunter followed his advice, and became a rich and happy man.

THE GOLAS

Bureau of Folkways and Bai Moore

The Gola people seem to have been among the **first** to migrate to the region of Liberia. Their language is difficult to classify; it is virtually distinct from the tongues of neighbouring tribes, and is possibly a direct descendant of the mother tongue of West Africa. The Golas were an invading group from the Upper Sudan, a turbulent and aggressive tribe who first settled in the Kongba Forest. They were skillful fighters and the blood of their enemies was liberally spilled about the edges of their land. They were formidable opponents to early Liberian rule.

Elder N'Jola Pate of Gbonjima states that one group of Gola people, the Tehr, migrated south from their early Liberian habitat in search of salt. They were infested with yaws and wore bark shoes to prevent rocks from cutting their feet; they lived in huts built of boo bark covered with pawa grass.

When the Tehr Golas approached the coast they arrived at the northern parameter of Dey territory and sought permission to pass through to the sea. With true diplomacy, they presented their White Heart to one of the Dey Leaders, Diason, in the form of seven women and seven slave-money (about \$40,000).

Diason held council, and invited the Tehr Golas to enter his land. In a fitting ceremony he placed some Dey soil on a white plate and gave it to the leader of the Golas, a symbol that they could not only pass through to the sea, but were welcome to settle on Dey soil as his stranger-children.

The Tehr Golas later turned against the Dey's and almost destroyed them.

A TALE OF TWO FEASTS

H. Rouhlac

All the animals of the forest decided to have a grand feast. Spider was appointed Master of Ceremonies, for everyone knew he was the greediest animal in the forest and they felt confident he would make sure there was more than enough to eat.

After much dancing and drinking of palm wine everyone sat down to eat; but Spider announced that everyone must first wash their hands clean. All the animals went to the river and washed their hands—but Monkey could not get his hands clean no matter how much he washed. He rubbed them with leaves, and sand, and oil, but they remained dirty; and he knew quite well that Monkey's hands can never be washed clean.

So Monkey was obliged to leave the feast; he was forbidden to eat anything, and returned to his home still

hungry. He was disappointed, and sat down to think how he could have revenge. Next day he announced to all the animals that he himself would give a feast, and that it would be held under the waters of a pond.

On the appointed day the animals arrived, and one after another they splashed into the water and let themselves sink to the bottom. Here they found a fine array of luscious fruits, fish, herbs and nuts and roots spread before them.

Spider came to the pond, but try as he would he could not sink down to the bottom. He borrowed a kaftan, which is a long Mandingo robe striped blue and white, and by filling the pockets with stones he managed to sink to the bottom. As all the animals were about to begin eating, Monkey stood up and made an announcement:

"This is an under-water feast," he said. "No one may wear a coat with stripes. Off with all striped coats!"

"Off with all striped coats!" echoed the animals, and looked around to see who was wearing one. There was only Spider, in his borrowed kaftan, and taking it off, he rose to the surface of the pond, while the other animals looked above their heads at him and laughed. Monkey was delighted, but since Spider was his guest he did not laugh.

"Why do you leave so early?" he gravely asked. "The feast has not yet begun. Have you already so much wind you cannot stay?"

Spider danced helplessly on the surface of the pond, from time to time poking his head beneath the surface to gaze in hungry disappointment at the lavish feast below.

An evil deed always comes home to roost. Even today one may see Spider on the surface of a quiet pond, skating about on the water and anxiously peering into the depths below.

HOW KPAHNA DEFEATED A GOBLIN

I. Karnley

Men built a bridge across the Loffa River, so that when the rain God visited the land and made the river quick with flood, people could still pass across. But in one of the rocks beneath the bridge there dwelt a Goblin who was most annoyed when ordinary folk walked above his head; and he formed the habit of devouring them. When a man approached, the Goblin would leap upon the bridge and thus challenge him:

"O man, if you would cross this bridge you must give me a hundred lashes with your stick, and I will give you one. I will lie on my stomach and cover my face; see that you beat me well."

This seemed a reasonable request, and the man would readily agree. The Goblin would lie down and cover his face, and when he had received a hundred lashes he would rise and kill the man with a single blow from a palm-rib, and then devour him.

Word spread about the land that a Goblin possessed the bridge; men ceased to pass that way, villages close to it were abandoned, and people fled away as the Goblin began to roam afield in search of human flesh. The Chief announced that he would give his daughter and half his riches to the man who would defeat the Goblin; but few men were brave enough to try, and those who did were killed.

A youth whose name was Kpahna heard of this reward. He was a village blacksmith, and his arms were strong. He hollowed out a tennites' hill, put in iron ore and charcoal and added glowing coals, pumped in air with leather bellows to make a roaring fire, and smelted iron into a heavy ball. He fixed the iron ball to the end of a long, strong stick, and went to meet the Goblin. He boldly approached the bridge holding the stick so that the iron ball could not be seen, and the Goblin jumped on the bridge to challenge him.

"O youth, only fools come to this bridge, and I eat fools for supper! Lash me a hundred times with your stick, and I will lash you once."

"You've forgotten something," said Kpahna.

"Forgotten what?"

"The part about lying down and covering your face."

"Ah. Well. Yes, I will lie on my stomach and cover my face; and see that you beat me well, for one of us must die."

He lay on his stomach and covered his face. Kpahna swung his stick aloft and brought the heavy iron ball crashing down on the Goblin's head.

"Aieeee!" the creature hollered. He sat on his tail and held his hands to his head, and moaned and rocked himself to and fro. "Aieeee! Who are you, O youth? That was indeed a blow of blows. From what land do you come?"

"I am Kpahna, and I come from a distant land where man is brave.

The Goblin looked at him uncertainly.

"Well—but you are only a simple youth. Try again."

Again the bludgeen smashed down on his skull; and, as before, Kpahna hid the ball of iron behind his back.

"Warrgh!" The Goblin rose to his feet and staggered into the forest, groaning with pain. Kpahna called him back.

"I cannot let you beat me any more," the Goblin cried.

"You must. It was your idea, not mine. Are you such cowardly Goblin that you cannot stand a few more blows?"

"Well, only a few more, then."

"Ninety-eight more, O most worthless of all Goblins."

"Then I will not lie down this time."

Kpahna laughed.

"What a miserable Goblin! You will lie down and cover your face, for thus it was agreed. Unless you want me to hit you in another and worse place..."

The demon hurriedly lay down. Kpahna whirled his stick around and round above his head until it sang a thin little

song; then he slammed the iron ball down on the Goblin's head with a terrible, crunching crack.

The Goblin shrieked in agony. He struggled to his knees, fell over the edge of the bridge to his rock below, and disappeared inside it. Kpahna leaned over the railing and sang a mocking song:

"Beat a Goblin, thrash a Goblin,
Make a Goblin suffer;
Beat his head until he's dead,
Then eat him for your supper!"

The Goblin trembled, and crouched fearfully inside his rock. Kpahna reported to the grateful Chief; he was given honour and riches, and the daughter of the Chief bore him many sons. Thereafter when people crossed the bridge the Goblin would cry out:

"Who is that who walks above my head?"

And whoever it was, Ciaffa or Boima or Zena or someone else would sing in mocking tones:

"I beat a Goblin, thrashed a Goblin,
Made a Goblin suffer;
I'll beat his head until he's dead,
And eat him for my supper!"

"Pass on, O Kpahna!" the Goblin would cry. "Move on, begone, three blows from you is enough, and much too much."

The Goblin stays within his rock, and men pass safely by.

HOW HARE OUTWITTED WOMAN WITH A POT OF BOILED CRABS
J. Padmore

In a certain village there lived a woman who had a daughter as ripe as a yellow mango and as fair as the forest flowers. This daughter was a good and gentle girl, and so desirable was she that men of every rank and trade from many chiefdoms came with gifts and promises and tried to marry her. But her mother loved her jealously, and to herself she vowed no man would ever take away her only daughter. Whenever a new suitor came, she said:

"To win my daughter you must pass a test: do you agree to this?"

Of course the suitor would agree; for the ways of women are devious, but a man must do his best. She would take him to a tall, thick tree whose wood had the strength of iron, and she would say:

"O man, cut down this tree. From the wood of the tree you must build a house upon that stone you see."

The man would attempt this impossible task, but no blade could even mark the tree. Many were the men who came in hope, and tried, and went away in black despair.

Brother Hare, whose long ears spring from a fertile brain, decided he would try. He made certain preparations, and went to the woman's house.

"I wish to marry your daughter," he boldly announced.

"Can you stand the test?" the woman asked.

"I can stand the test."

She led him to the tall, thick tree.

"Cut down this tree," she commanded him, "and from the wood of the tree build a house upon that stone."

"I shall do that little thing," Hare declared, and handed her a pot. "But since I do not eat anything but crabs, will you cook these crabs soft for me before I start?"

The woman agreed to do this, and when she went away Brother Hare sat down and began to sing a song.

"What man can cut an iron tree,
Or build a house upon a stone?
What woman can live honestly,
Or soften crabs with skins of bone?"

When the woman returned with his food he took one of the crabs and bit on it.

"O woman!" he cried. "You said you would cook these crabs soft for me. They are still as hard as bone!"

The woman was puzzled.

"But Brother Hare," she protested, "who can cook a crab so that all of it is soft?"

"Who, indeed?" Hare echoed. "And who can cut an iron tree, or build a house upon a stone?"

The woman was outwitted; she could not keep her promise to cook the crabs soft, and was obliged to give her daughter to Brother Hare.

CHAPTER III THE KISSI

WHY ELEPHANTS FLEE FROM GOATS

W. Walker

Elephant and Goat went out together to work in the fields, hoeing the soil and planting cassava stems. Goat was thrifty and industrious, but Elephant was lazy and ate more than he grew. By midday they were hungry, and Goat, who could not trust Elephant with food, said:

"It is time to eat. Since I am the smallest, I shall prepare the meal."

"Not at all," declared the hungry Elephant. "You will not make enough. Since it is I who will eat most, I shall prepare your meal."

Goat thought: "If Elephant does so, he will eat as he works and my share will be quite small! Therefore he said:

"You are a fool, Elephant. Your head is all bone. I can eat more than you, so I shall prepare our meal."

Elephant could scarcely believe his ears. He looked down at Goat, a small and homely animal who did not reach his knee, and protested: "I really cannot believe that you can eat more than I. You are too small. I am too big. I always eat much more than you."

"Then let us have a competition," Goat suggested, and Elephant agreed. They abandoned their farming for the day, and for several hours they laboured to gather a pile of herbs and fruits and grass and roots. This they divided into two

equal heaps, and started eating.

Elephant ate quickly till his stomach swelled and pained him, and he lay down to sleep a little and wait to see how much Goat would eat. Goat slowly munched, and munched, and when he could eat no more he kept on steadily chewing the same mouthful of grass. When Elephant woke up he saw that Goat still chewed, and each time he fell asleep again Goat moved some of his food to Elephant's pile. For many hours Goat chewed on and his pile of food grew lower and lower still till there was very little left; and Elephant became amazed that Goat could eat so much.

"How is it, Goat," he asked, "that you can eat so much? I am much larger than you, but you have eaten more."

"Indeed I have," said Goat. "My appetite is endless. When I finish this pile of food I shall eat the rest of yours; and if I am not satisfied, I swear I'll eat you too!"

He announced this in such a menacing tone that Elephant became quite alarmed; for truly Goat appeared to have an astonishing capacity. After some reflection he rose clumsily to his feet, and said off-handedly:

"Goat, I think I'll go into the forest and find some honey.

Elephant went deep into the forest, and after travelling for many days he came to the High Forests of the hinterland. He never returned. Since that time Goat has continued to chew his cud steadily, and men abroad in the High Forests take Goat with them to frighten elephants away.

HOW THREE BROTHERS SOUGHT THEIR FORTUNES

1. Gray

Three orphan-brothers had land which was so sour and full of stones that they decided to travel to some distant place to find rich soil. They had been raised in a poor and unimportant village, and had learned to love each other. The oldest brother possessed an unusual gift. He could often tell, by dreams and other signs, what would happen in the future.

The second brother was a warrior and a hunter, a tall and powerful man who could spear a kola nut at fifty paces, or walk with a bullock on his back for three nights and days.

The youngest brother was handsomest of them all, as handsome as a godling and skilled in the arts which women most admire. All women fell in love with him, and his own love for women knew no end; so angry were the husbands in that village that he was wise to leave there when he did.

The three brothers journeyed east through foreign lands for many weeks, and came to a large white city on a plain below a mountain. On the mountain lived a hairy monster with teeth the size of elephant tusks and seven legs like palm trunks. Each year the monster ate a thousand people, so the Chief of the white city had offered a quarter of his lands to the warrior who would rid the country of this awful creature.

When the three brothers arrived the Chief was absent on a journey; and the youngest brother fell in love with the

Chief's first wife. Each night he went to her, although he knew he would be killed if ever the Chief found out; and his brothers feared for him. Each day the eldest brother counted the nuts on a palm beside his door; several fell each day, and when but one was left he said to his youngest brother:

"Beware! Take care! The Chief returns tomorrow."

This good advice was ignored. On the following night the young man went as usual to the palace; but he knocked on the door in vain. At length he took a stone and beat upon the door, suddenly the Chief rushed out, made angry by such noise, cut off the lover's hand with a single sword-stroke and slammed the door in his face.

The elder brother tenderly treated the wound with clean red clay and healing herbs, and the middle brother, who was the warrior, pondered what he should do. He decided to hunt and kill the monster, if he could, for this was the only way they could now find favour with the Chief.

That very night he found the monster on the mountain top crunching the bones of an elephant; and here they fought by the light of the moon till trees were splintered and rocks were cleft, and blood lay on the ground. The warrior's flesh was gashed and slashed by fangs and flailing talons; the monster's hide was gouged and ripped by spear and knife, and several of his seven legs were broken.

The mountain groaned and trembled, and moon hid fearfully in black storm clouds and high winds came to howl and shriek about the scene of battle. The hideous fight was on through

midnight until dawn, and the gods of men assembled in the shadows in silent admiration of their man.

As the sun rose over the edge of the plain and gilded the mountain top the warrior stumbled tiredly down the mountain-side to report to his two brothers. As he entered the city, heralds were abroad announcing that no man could leave the city until it was discovered who had knocked at the palace door the previous evening. The eldest brother tended the warrior's wounds, then went up to the palace and stood before the Chief.

"O Chief," he began, "I am the eldest of three brothers who came from a foreign land, and it was my youngest brother who knocked on your door last night."

"So! Then let him be brought before me."

"Let him be brought indeed," agreed the elder brother. "Let also our other brother be brought here: for it was he who slew your monster on the mountain top. And when our youngest brother came here to report, you cut his hand off. Is that a just reward, O Chief?"

These words amazed the Chief.

"You say the monster is dead?"

"My younger brother slew it."

"And it was your youngest brother who came here to report?"

"You cut his hand off."

"Then, indeed, you are the worthiest of all men, and have been severely wronged. The three of you shall share half the lands which I possess, rich and fruitful lands, and half

my gold as well."

But for the rest of his life the lack of a hand reminded the youngest brother that he should not toy with the wives of other men.

STORY OF TWO MONSTERS

J. Czearn

Men tell a tale of two brothers who were orphans. They came of a poor family, and having no land of their own they sought work where they could.

"We are poor," the younger one suggested.

"But where? Such things are not easily found."

"We should look for riches where riches abound, and that is in foreign places far from here."

"Then let us travel," agreed the elder. "Let us each take a different direction, and after one moon we will return and see if either of us had been successful."

Going from their village they came upon two roads; one went towards the rising sun, the other towards the setting moon; and here the brothers parted. The younger one travelled east with his dog and his spear and a small bag of food; he walked for many days over hills and streams and mountains and valleys, and finally the road, which had started out so boldly, became an uncertain track snaking thinly through

great forests and dark swamps in the most remote corner of the land. The young man grew afraid, but just as he was about to turn back he came upon the ruins of an old town, buried in vines and shrubs.

"Perhaps, in a place like this where men have lived and died," he reasoned, "there will be hidden treasures." He began to look, and his dog helped him. For a whole day he hunted in all the hundred places where treasure might have been hidden, but discovered nothing more interesting than a large pot. The pot was too heavy to pick up and too tall for him to see inside; but he knew that such a tall and beautiful pot must have been used for some important purpose, so using all his strength he pushed it over....and a monster rolled out on the ground.

The young man was alarmed. He watched in growing fear as the monster swelled and swelled, just as if it had been stuffed inside the pot like a dog in a peanut shell; and when the thing had grown very big indeed it glared down at the young man. He made an angry growling sound, and forest birds took flight.

"Arrgh! Foolish man! For centuries I have slept, and now you have awakened me. You must now carry me on your back until you die; and if you will not, you shall die at once!"

The young treasure-hunter decided he would have to try, although it seemed an impossible task; for it was a large monster, and although one foot was only as large as a pebble,

the other was as large as a house. He managed to barely lift the creature, and for a time he staggered through the ruined town; but such was the demon's weight that soon the young man was exhausted, and set his burden down.

"Carry me!" the monster roared.

"One moment, Master; I must lay an egg." The youth withdrew among the weeds and waited, resting, for some time. He knew he could not carry this demon any longer, and stood in danger of losing his life; so he took a small gourd of red pepper from his little bag, and as he returned to the monster he pretended to be eating it. The monster demanded:

"What are you eating?"

"It is a magic powder which will make me strong; strong enough to carry you."

The creature snatched the gourd and emptied a pound of red pepper into his mouth. Within a moment his eyes had bulged like coconuts, fumes issued from his mouth and streams of perspiration began pouring down his face. He fell down and rolled on the ground in pain, and the young man thrust his spear into the monster's heart.

He was curious to know what made one foot so large, and what made the other small, so he slit the little foot with his knife and found a nut inside; and since he did not know what kind of nut it was, he gave it to his dog. The dog ate the nut and began to grow smaller and smaller until finally he disappeared, and only the nut was left. The young man had never seen a nut like this before, so he picked it up and

put it in his little bag.

When he slit open the bigger foot he was surprised to see cattle the size of dogs came forth, and they at once began to grow in size until they formed a handsome herd. Here were riches indeed: so he set out to return to his village with the cattle, and at the junction of the two roads he met his brother. His brother had been frightened of the forest, and had not journeyed far.

"Greetings. What fortune did you have?" the younger brother asked.

"No fortune, only blistered feet and hunger, red ants and thirst, and other things. And what of you? Are these your cattle?"

"I won them from a monster. Let us return to our village as rich men, and live there with fine clothes and feasts, as rich men do."

They began driving the cattle towards their village; but the elder brother held jealousy in his heart, and began wondering if he would become a slave to his rich brother. He decided to murder him. So as they were walking together, he suddenly thrust his spear through the young man's heart, took his little bag and flung his body carelessly in a ditch. When he reached his village he left the cattle outside in a field, hung the bag upon a bush, and went in to see the Chief.

"O Chief," he said, "I travelled far abroad, through many hardships and great danger, and killed a monster who had many cattle. I have brought the cattle back and they wait outside

the village; but since I have no land to graze them on, I would give half of them to you if you will give me land."

The Chief agreed to do this, and bade his councillors discover the most suitable grazing land.

"Take me to this herd," he commanded, and the wicked brother led him outside the village. But during this time one of the cattle had found the bag and eaten the magic nut, which held a fragrance loved by animals, and the beast shrank and disappeared. Other cattle came and found the nut lying on the ground, ate it, and in turn shrank away, until the whole herd had disappeared. So when the murderer and the Chief came to the appointed place, no sign remained of the beautiful fat herd. The Chief was furious.

"You lying dog! What foolery is this? Do you seek to trade with cattle you do not have? Am I a fool that I should give land to a liar and a cheat? Men, let this rogue be bound and fed on cattle-dung until he dies."

Riches come, and pass away, and murder follows them.

THE KISSI

Fr. S. Atkinson

The Kissi were, like the Golas, one of the first tribes to arrive. Their language belongs to what is known as the West Atlantic Group, part of a larger classification of 'class-languages' which stretches from Lake Chad to the Senegal River.

The Kissi are a muscular and thickset people, proud and stubborn as well as being accomplished fighters. Paramount Chief Quirmolu states that when the Kissi came south from the Sudan they found a tribe called the Kono occupying a fertile tract of forestland and cultivated fields. They went to war with the Konos, invaded their land and drove a wedge through the centre of their tribe, splitting them in two. One-half of the Konos was forced west into Sierra Leone, where they are today; the other half fled to the northeast into French Guinea.

It has been suggested that the Konos were in fact a Kissi advance-guard who, having been sent south on reconnaissance to find new land, settled here without bothering to send word back to their people, and married the women of neighbouring tribes.

HOW FIRE CAME TO EARTH

E. F. MarCarthy

Long ago only Meleka, the god who lives in the sky, possessed the gift of fire; and in his wisdom he withheld it from Man. One day he gave a firestick to Hawk and bade him fly through the heavens to kindle a dark star, **but the** firestick fell from the mouth of Hawk and dropped down to earth. It landed amid dry grass and a fire began, and men who saw the fire came to gaze on it in wonder, while Hawk flew down through the smoke trying in vain to seize the fire.

Men felt the heat of fire and saw that it ate sticks. They realised that fire could keep them warm at night, so each man carried a pot of coals to his house and kept them burning bright with sticks of wood. Until that time all food was eaten raw, but women now discovered that fire had magic to improve raw food, and thus they learned to cook. In those days there were no cooking pots, only hollowed stones, but rice and water, roots and meat were put in these hollowed stones and heated, and provided pleasing fare.

But no one knew how to kill fire except by starving it to death until one day a woman chanced to spill water on her fire. The water fought the fire, which hissed angrily and grew cold. It was then thought that fire and water must be married, since they fought so well; and as water was called Mending, fire became known as Yinding, and still is.

Hawk has never ceased trying to recapture fire, which he must some day return to Meleka. He hovers over towns and villages waiting for his chance, and may be seen diving and swooping about on the edge of forest fires. But he cannot approach a fire until it burns quite low, and then only the biggest sticks are left, too big for a hawk to carry.

HOW HAWK LEARNED OF THE SHALLOW HEARTS OF MEN

E. F. MarCarthy

In a certain tree called the Palmolin Tree, in which the palm birds live, Chameleon has his home. Men plant these trees in the centre of their villages, and thus it was that Chameleon lived in a tree by a village market place. People feared this animal, for although it was quite small it possessed surprising strength. It would spring on the backs of passing men and could not be removed until frightened by lightning and thunder. Then it would fall to the ground and run back to the Palmolin Tree.

One day when Hawk was flying above the town he saw Chameleon on the ground, and swooping down he seized the little animal in his beak and carried him into the air. The people in the village below rejoiced and sang the praises of clever Hawk.

"O Hawk!" they cried, "O greatest of all birds! You have captured the awful Chameleon, that wicked animal who has lived among us causing us fear and trouble. O clever Hawk, with all our hearts we thank you!"

The people were very happy. But up in the air Chameleon confided to Hawk:

"Brother, let me go back to my tree. Long have I lived among men, and I know they have two tongues. Today they praise a man and tomorrow they speak against him, for their hearts are shallow and their minds are weak. Let me return, O brother, to my tree."

But Hawk was full of the praises of the villagers.

"The people praise and love me," he declared. "I have found great favour with them. I will eat you, and they may make me Chief!"

"Unhappy bird!" Chameleon said. "Tomorrow men will curse you. Their memories are brief. Men only love themselves, as you will see."

Suddenly he grasped Hawk by the throat, and so powerful was his hold that Hawk began to strangle, and fell down, and dropped breathless in the market place. The people quickly gathered, and saw Chameleon had overpowered Hawk.

"Noble Chameleon!" they cried. "O good and clever animal! You have defeated wicked Hawk, the thief who steals our chickens. With all our hearts we thank you for ridding us of that evil bird!"

They heaped praises on Chameleon and rejoiced. The little animal whispered in Hawk's ear:

"You see now, brother? Now do you realize how shallow are the hearts of men? They have double tongues, and how short their memories are: a little time ago they praised you and cursed me. Now they curse you and heap honour on me."

"I understand," Hawk murmured. "Forgive me, Chameleon. Let us always be friends, for I know that Man will always be our common enemy!"

Then Hawk flew up into the air, and Chameleon went back to his Palmolin Tree, and these two today are allied in friendship against the treachery of Man.

HOW RAIN CAME TO THE EARTH

P. Korvah

Meleka, who lives in the sky and is the greatest of all gods, had a small girl-child named Sia, meaning first-born. This great god, who made the world and all living and un-living things, cared greatly for his daughter, but even he could not always prevent her from shedding childish tears. In those days Meleka did not move about, but lived in one place in the sky, and his daughter's tears fell in one place.

When the daughter of a big god cries, something must happen to the earth, and what happened was that the tears fell down as rain in storms and squalls and showers.

It was often the wickedness of men which made the godling cry, and when Meleka shouted at mankind and unsheathed his gleaming sword thunder boomed and lightning flashed, and Sia, becoming frightened, wept all the more.

Since Meleka was always in one place Sia's tears all fell in a certain area, and they fell and kept on falling until they formed the sea. When Meleka saw so much water there, and saw, too, that the land was brown and dry, he summoned the winds to push him here and there across the world, and thus rain came to the dry brown earth and green things grew upon it. Meleka was pleased with the winds, and entrusted his daughter to them.

That is why rain-diviners have to call upon the winds when they wish to break a drought or stop a flood, and they study the clouds and the ways of the winds to find where Sia is.

THE FISHERMAN WHO MARRIED A WATER SPIRIT

E. F. Macarthy

Once upon a time there was a fisherman who went forth every day to sit on the river in his canoe and fish. He was a clever and industrious man and his name was Wana, but always when sitting alone in his canoe he felt a great emptiness within his heart.

"Ah," he would sigh, "if I only had a wife!"

He would have preferred a wife to all the fishes in the river, for he was a lonely man with no family at all, and every evening he returned to an empty hut, prepared his own meal, and passed the night alone. As he sat in his canoe he often told the river how much he desired a wife, and prayed that he might be pleased with many children.

A river spirit overheard him. She had the form of a crocodile and lived on the bottom of the river, but when she watched and watched the man and saw that he was gentle, good, and honest, she began to plan a plan.

One day, as was his custom, Wana left his fishing early to attend the weekly market. The river spirit waited until he had gone; then she climbed onto the river bank and stepped out of the crocodile skin to reveal herself as a singularly beautiful young maiden. She carefully hid her crocodile skin beneath a rock and went to the town market. Many people from neighbouring villages attended this weekly market, and everyone wondered whom the beautiful stranger could be.

When nightfall came and the market was over she went to the fisherman's house; he was preparing his evening meal.

"O fisherman", she said, "I am a stranger here, and my village is far off. I beg you to let me sleep in your house tonight.

Wana welcomed her courteously. She prepared his simple meal for him in such a wifely fashion that first he ate from hunger and then from sheer delight: never had he tasted such exquisite cooking. And though the beauty of this woman filled

his heart with admiration, he gave her his own bed and she slept there in peace.

In the morning the maiden asked him to escort her a little way; but near the river she begged him to leave her and turn back. Alone she went to the river bank, and having carefully looked about she slipped into the crocodile skin and went into the river. During the following days she heard Wana sigh longingly for the lovely maiden who had passed the night within his house.

Next market day the river spirit came out of the water again, hid her crocodile skin beneath the rock, and went to market. Again she begged shelter at Wana's hut, and he was glad when he saw her. She passed the night, and in the morning went away.

This continued for some time, and Wana came to love her with a great and urgent love. Since he was a humble man and considered her the daughter of some important chief he could not bring himself to ask her hand in marriage, and was too much a gentleman to cause her any harm; but when he inquired of her village and home and family, the maiden was so evasive in her answers that finally his suspicions were aroused.

There came a certain day when he escorted her, as usual, some little way along the path towards the river, and, as usual, when they reached a certain place she asked him to turn back. Wana pretended to turn back, but walking softly, softly, he followed the maiden until she reached the river bank. Thinking herself alone she took the crocodile skin from beneath the rock, put it on, and went into the river.

Wana was astonished.

"Can this be true?" he asked himself. "Is she, then a water spirit? How can I win and wed a maiden who lives inside the river for six days of the week?"

Deep in thought he went away, and planned a plan to win her for alltime. Next market day the maiden came again, so beautiful that the fisherman was oppressed by burning love. That night, as she slept, he slipped away. He ran to the river bank. He took the crocodile skin from underneath the rock and carried it to a far, far place, buried it, and returned to his house before dawn broke.

As usual he escorted the lady towards the river, and turned back at her request. He waited in his house. The river spirit went to the river and put her hand beneath the rock to find her skin.

The skin was gone! It had completely disappeared.

She searched about and about, and up and down the bank, under other rocks and everywhere she could; but search as she would, the skin was nowhere to be seen. What could she do? Spirit Laws obliged her to return to her own place, but now she could not. She sat upon the rock and wept a while, then she rose and went to the fisherman who had been so good to her, and whom she hoped would one day take her for his wife.

She entered his house.

"I have come to you," she said, and she went to him. Thus they were wedded, and passed the night together, and in the

morning when she awoke she said:

"O Wang Yuyuan, how glad I am the happiest of wives. But last night I dreamed a terrible dream, and I tell you this: if any man should bring the skin of a crocodile to this town, I shall surely die! So if you see such a thing yourself anywhere along the river bank, drop it in the river if you love me."

Thus it is seen that the Sky God hears the prayers of honest men and fills their needs.

HOW A WOMAN OVERCOMES THE SPIRIT OF A SNAKE

E. F. McCarthy

There was a woman who had no child, and every day when she went to fetch water she would softly cry:

"Oh, how I wish I had a child for my very own!"

Two cobras heard her, and they began talking. The woman overheard them. The first one said:

"She will have a son, and I will be the spirit of her son."

The second cobra said:

"And when the boy is old enough to join the Snake Society, I shall bite him. The boy will die in agony, his mother will die of a broken heart, and you will return to live again with me."

The woman caught up, and guarded these strange words inside her heart. The following year she bore a child, a baby boy who

was the treasure and the centre of her life. When he was approaching manhood he was required to join the Snake Society. The Snake Society is a secret group of men whose totem is the snake; their secrets are well guarded and they form a powerful brotherhood. The initiation ceremony takes place deep in the forest, and if a woman goes there or even sees the House of Ceremonies she is killed.

But the mother of this boy knew of the cobra's prophecy, and determined to protect her son; she fought with all her strength to go with him into the forest. The people held her but she struggled with such tearful anguish that at length the Chief (and this woman was his niece) decided that on this one occasion a woman would be permitted to attend the ceremony.

The initiation ceremony is severe and men must have courage to endure it: but that woman gladly suffered days and nights of pain within the House of Ceremonies in order to remain beside her son. When the final night was over, the snake spirit inside her son caused him to rise and move towards the door. His mother rose and held him back.

"But mother," he protested, "I wish to go outside and make my morning water."

"Wait, my son," she begged him, and turning to another man she asked: "O man, go out and see if any harmful creature is about."

The man went out and cautiously looked about, and soon discovered a large cobra hiding beneath a basket. He called his friends and killed it. The snake spirit inside the boy had no

other way to die and was obliged to wait until his natural death released it; and the man lived with his mother till she died herself.

Thus can a mother's love overpower evil things.

THE OTTER WHO ATE CRABS

W. Memolu

An otter lived in a river and consistently ate crabs. He ate crabs every day and several times each night; the crabs along the river were most disturbed. They decided they would hold a conference to discuss what should be done.

"This wicked animal must be removed," they said. "He's eaten all our uncles, aunts and brothers, and soon he'll eat us too. What shall we do?"

Some said he should be trapped and slowly eaten; others thought that crabs should stay in holes; a few suggested a mass attack, but no one wished to lead it. So they sought the River Spirit's good advice.

"The gall-bladder of a crocodile is a very poisonous thing," the River Spirit said. "One of you must eat some gall and die. He will be a deadly bait for Otter."

No crab wanted to eat the gall, so an elderly crab was seized and stuffed with gall by force. His body was left on the river bed, and all the other crabs hid in their holes till Otter came. Otter found the poisoned crab, ate it, and soon

died.

The crabs came scuttling from their holes dancing and rejoicing.

"What clever people crabs are!" they cried happily. "Our great skill and wisdom killed the evil Otter. We are brave and noble animals of great intelligence!"

They forgot that they had acted on the River Spirit's advice; they forgot to give him thanks. They danced about poor Otter singing their own praises, then swarmed on Otter to feed upon his flesh.

The River Spirit was annoyed by the foolish vanity of the crabs, and sent word to another otter in a river far away. This second otter was angry when he heard a clan of wicked, stupid crabs had caused his brother such a tragic death, and he decided he would travel to that river and exact a just revenge.

The river crabs had grown bold and confident; they wandered where they wished now that Otter had been killed, and their holes had all filled in. So when this new otter suddenly appeared the crabs were taken by surprise--they had no place of refuge, and the slaughter which the otter caused is still talked about in whispers to this day.

And Otter stayed amongst them, eating every crab he caught. Thus it is seen that when a victory is gained the people, while rejoicing, should remember to thank God, and should take care lest over-confidence should invite disaster.

THE LONA AND MENDI

The Lona and Mendi Tribes came from the northeast, skirting the great Mandingo Plateau. The Lona were a vigorous and warlike people and today they are relied upon to furnish some of the best recruits for the Liberian Frontier Force; they settled among the mountains and high forests of northern Liberia, a wild and remote watershed where five of the nation's greatest rivers find their source.

The Lona pressed against the tribes south of them, and were engaged in sporadic feuds with their neighbours. When a powerful Mandingo raiding force came down from Mandingoland in the north, led by a man named Foli, a Lona Chief called Nyakwe Nyakwe joined the raiders with his army. The Mandingo-Lona combination made a treaty with the Kpelle, attacked the Gola and drove them west into uninhabited forests. The raiders carried the war into Vai territory, and it is said that Yabakwa on the Japala Creek was founded by these warriors.

The Lona later turned against the Kpelle, and a warrior called Bau led his people into battle. Amongst many places the Lona captured was Malawo Hill, and here Bau built a town which soon gained the reputation of being the most feared and dreadful place in the land. The people of this town were known as Gizima, "the People on the Hill", and they were the most powerful exponents of black magic and the art of poisons known in the land.

This town was also the home of outlaws, renegades and refugees from tribal justice, but has since been made aware of the law and power of the Liberian Government.

Legend tells of a movement south from the High Forests by a group of Loma people who were sent forth to find a route to the sea. They included some hundreds of warriors; they made their way down through Gola and Dey country and established a beach-head on the coast. They began sending salt back to their tribe, but the Deys, who had developed the manufacture of salt by boiling sea-water and were jealous of their monopoly, attacked and drove them north.

The Loma fought their way north to Gola country, and the Golas pushed them further until they came to the southern limits of their own land. Here they settled and became the Belle Tribe.

So much for the legend: but if the facts of the coastal sortie as described are based on truth, it must be pointed out that this group of people did not become the Belle Tribe. The Bureau of Folkways has evidence that the Belle belong to the Kru group and came from the east as an organized tribe.

Once a group of Loma people who knew the use of horses made an alliance with the Mende Tribe, hoping to conquer the remaining bulk of the Lomas. The attempt failed, and the Loma-Mende group had to fall back behind a huge rocky 'fossa' called Kpaky Fossa. There are many such granite Loma horrebutts, and this one is between Bolahun and Kolahun. The defeated band settled here and became known as the Badi Tribe.

THE SUN, THE MOON, AND THE STARS

When the world was young the moon was a ball of fire, like the sun; some of the stars were the children of the sun, and the others belonged to the moon. The sun was uncle to the moon, and the moon was nephew to the sun.

There came a time of hunger when the sun said:

"Moon, let us eat our children."

The moon considered this, and then agreed. The sun brought the first food, one of its own stars, divided it in two and ate its share. The moon ate a small portion of its share and kept the balance. When it was time for them to eat one of the moon's children, the moon produced the remainder of the sun's child and gave half to the sun as his share. The sun was a fool, for only his own child had been eaten. He was surprised to find the moon still had many left.

There was big palaver. The sun and the moon decided to live apart. The moon took his fire and divided it among his stars, so that each one had a lamp and the sun could not devour them secretly; and that is why the sun is hotter than the moon. And because of the big palaver the moon shines only at night, attended by his children with their lamps, for the moon is afraid that his uncle might come and eat him.

THE THREE SISTERS WHO SAW GOD

P. D. Korwah

In a village there lived three sisters. The eldest was called Porofa after the men's Poro Society. The second was known as Sandefa after the women's Sande Society. The third was named Weiva, which meant adulteress.

While walking through the forest by a lonely path these three sisters saw Ngala bathing in a pond. Ngala had a narrow waist, as small as the waist of a wasp, and since he did not care that men should know of this he always wore a heavy girdle. But he had taken off his girdle to bathe, and when Porofa politely coughed to let him know she and her sisters were approaching, he quickly seized his girdle, put it on, and flung his robes about him.

As Porofa drew nigh and was passing with her face averted modestly, Ngala asked:

"O maiden, did you look upon me as I bathed?"

Porofa said she had not, for she had no wish to hurt Ngala's feelings. Sandefa likewise said no. But when Ngala asked Weiva if she had looked upon him, she laughed and mockingly replied:

"Oh yes, indeed I saw you. You have a funny waist just like a wasp!"

Ngala blessed Porofa and Sandefa, and through them he blessed the Poro and Sande Societies, promising that they and their secrets would always be honoured and respected.

But he cursed Weiva. He cursed her and her children and laid the stain of illfame and lifelong shame upon her face. And that is why immorality can never be kept secret, and why wicked women such as Weiva are shunned by worthy people.

TWO MAIDENS AND THEIR LOVER

A. Sallah

Orphan fell in love with two young girls who lived in different towns; he loved them equally, and they loved him too.

All the young girls in these two towns were to be joined to the women's powerful Sande Society on a certain day; on that day each town would hold a feast, with song and dance and palmwine, and Orphan wished to be present at each feast.

On the appointed day he set out from his village and came to a place where the road forked, leading to each of the towns where he wished to go.

"What shall I do?" he asked himself. "Which way shall I go?" If I go to one girl the other will think less of me, and I could not bear to lose the love of either. Better to die in happiness than live in disappointment."

He decided to kill himself; he ate a poisonous fruit from a nearby tree, and died. In their different towns each of the two girls waited for their lover, and when he failed to come the first went forth to meet him. When she found

him dead beside the road she grieved until her heart seemed near bursting, and being unable to live without her lover she, too, ate a poisonous fruit from the tree, then flung herself on Orphan's body, and so died.

Soon after the second maiden came and found her lover and her rival dead beside the road. She cast herself upon the ground beside them wailing and weeping, and swooned away. After a time she rose, and wild with grief she fled back to her town and summoned a powerful medicine man. With haste she hustled and hurried him to the place and begged him to bring her lover back to life.

The medicine man took leaves from the poisonous tree and crushed them. He caught the juice in a snail shell. He cut the flesh above the heart of Orphan and the lifeless girl, poured in the juice, and uttered certain magic words. For some moments nothing happened, and the second girl decided she herself would die if Orphan could not live again; but then the bodies began to stir, and Orphan and the girl with him came back to life.

The two girls and their lover shed tears of happiness; Orphan embraced both of them, and they clung to him. But then the girls drew away, glancing jealously at each other, and turned beseeching eyes on Orphan.

"You must choose one of us," they said to him. "You cannot have us both, we love you too much for that. Oh Orphan, you must choose!"

One girl had killed herself for love of him. The other girl had saved his life, and saved her rival's too.

Which girl should he choose?

THE THREE BROTHERS WHO WORKED FOR GOD

P. Korvah

There were three brothers who worked for Ngala. They worked for many years and then he gave them their reward. He had three gifts, and let them choose which they should have; the gifts were Wealth, Life, and Wisdom.

The eldest brother desired riches and chose Wealth.

The second one feared death and chose Life.

The youngest brother placed his trust in Wisdom.

The first brother abused wealth by gambling and purchasing depravity, so Wealth lost all respect for him and went away, leaving him poor.

The second brother misused his life with evil companions, drink, laziness and gluttony, so Life lost all respect for him and went away, leaving him dead.

The youngest one in his Wisdom lived honestly and well and earned the love and respect of men. Wealth and Life came to him and stayed, and he enjoyed full and fruitful years of honour, happiness and peace.

If a man possesses Wisdom, all things will come to him.

HOW A WUUNT AND NINE EVIL SPIRITS

S. Howard

An evil spirit lived in a hole in the ground, as evil spirits do, and he had a wife and seven children. When hungry season came and there was nothing left to eat, the seven children cried:

"Father, find us something to eat, or we will die!"

The wicked spirit went out to see what he could find, and when walking along a road he overtook a man who carried a kinjah of rice on his back.

"Stranger," he said politely, "since we travel the same way I will help you. Place your burden on my back, and rest awhile."

The man willingly agreed to this, but as soon as he had the kinjah strapped securely to his back the spirit started running. He ran so fast the man could not keep up, and escaped into the forest with the load of rice. He was feeling proud and happy as he drew near to his home, for evil spirits love stealing even better than they love eating, and he made pleasant noises for his family to hear. Also he sang a song:

"Put on the pot and rake is hot
To cook what I am bringing.
I bring a prize, a fine surprise,
Which makes a song for singing.

The rice was cooked and the Lanny family ate till their stomachs swelled. In the days which followed the spirit went out regularly to find men who carried burdens of food, and he always managed to steal something and bring it home. He was too lazy to grow his own food, and too dishonest to buy any. For several months he continued stealing, and finally things came to such a pass that men in a nearby town asked their Head Mawni to help them rid the land of this cunning thief.

The Mawni Society is the most secret and important of all Lona tribal societies, and the Head Mawni in every town possesses at least one Wuuni. A Wuuni is an unseen something which has no respect for evil spirits and will catch and devour one whenever it can; and it talks Lona through its Head. Mawni calls upon it only in cases of great need.

The Head Mawni of this town talked to his Wuuni and put it in a kinjah which appeared to be full of rice. The Mawni put the kinjah on his own back, and singing lustily to attract the spirit's attention he walked through the forest. Soon the spirit appeared, stole the kinjah and ran away. As he drew near his home he made pleasant noises for his family to hear, and sang a song:

"A bag of rice is rather nice
And better if it's stolen;
Let's fill the pot and eat the lot
Until we're fully swollen."

The Wuuni laughed quietly to himself, and a shiver trickled down the spirit's spine. The Wuuni softly sang:

"An Evil Thing should never sing
While bearing bags untied;
They might have mice instead of rice,
Or something worse, inside."

The spirit heard someone singing and hurried quickly to his hole. His family gathered around while he untied the kinjah--and out jumped the Wuuni!

The spirits cried out in alarm, and huddled in one corner of the hole.

"Give me food!" snarled the Wuuni. The spirit trembled, and pushed his wife across. The Wuuni tore her to pieces and cracked her bones. "More!" he demanded. The helpless spirit pushed his children across one by one, although they cried out bitterly against his treatment, and when all seven had been swallowed the father spirit tried to make himself as small as possible.

"O Evil Thing," the Wuuni sang,

"You've stolen, lied, and cheated.

"All those who do such things as you

"Must be severely treated."

But he did not eat the spirit at once, for the Head Mawmi had requested him to bring the thief back to the town that night. The spirit, of course, was the undead part of a man who had died in the town some years before; and the family to which he had belonged, and the Head Mawmi, wanted to find out why he had been doing such wicked things instead of helping with the crops. As is the custom in such cases a

two-roomed house was chosen as the place of trial; the descendants of the spirit gathered in one room, and the Head Mawni, the Wuuni, and the evil spirit entered the other one, which was quite empty except for a few dry sticks.

The Head Mawni asked the spirit why he had been so wicked since he left his mortal body.

"My family was unkind to me," the spirit complained. I told them my spirit would trouble them when I died, but they only laughed. They made me suffer. When I died they neglected my grave. Why should I love such people?"

His family and descendants in the next room hotly denied this, and gave examples of their kindness to him. The Wuuni could be heard crying "let me kill him" in a nasal voice. The spirit argued bitterly with the people in the next-door room, but finally judgement was given against him, and it was decided that he must die.

"Can I kill him?" the Wuuni asked excitedly.

"You can kill him," the Head Mawni agreed. The spirit shrilled in panic. The people in the next-door room heard the Wuuni cracking his bones as if they were dry sticks of wood, and then heard the sounds of eating. When they went in later the Wuuni had already gone away, and not even a crumb lay on the floor to mark the passing of the evil spirit. There was only the Head Mawni and a few broken sticks. The spirit no longer existed even as a spirit, and would never return to trouble the town again.

"Thus an evil spirit suffered a terrible and just punishment, as it always is done with living flowers, and a crime was done, as it always is done with living flowers, and a crime was done."

THE LIZARD AND THE CATFISH

P. Korvich

A lizard with an orange-coloured head lives in a certain tree close to a river; and he would not marry anyone who did not have a soft, smooth skin.

In the river there was a catfish; and she was very beautiful, and she was determined to marry the lizard with the orange-coloured head.

A woodman came and cut the lizard's tree, and he fell down the bank so that it rolled to the river bank. Lizard walked from the tree, following a wall as if he knew, and came to the river margin.

He saw Catfish down below, and she came up to him, and she looked up and caught sight of Lizard, with his bright orange-coloured head, and so they fell in love; and thought they did. Catfish invited Lizard down to her house in the deepest, coolest part of the river; and Lizard wanted a good night's sleep there, Catfish liked to sleep there, but Lizard loved sunlight and heat, and he wanted to go with her and the horrid slime in the river.

In the morning he invited Catfish to his house in the grove of the trees and there poor Catfish lay, for she had laid

swooning, while the man bounded down and kissed her. She awoke and saw, who nearly died.

It should not be said that they could never marry, as from that time they lived apart, which shows that people should look for more than beauty when they seek a life-long mate.

THE MAN WHO LOVED A LIONESSES

The Chief of a town desired to marry a certain young woman, but she already had a lover and refused. The Chief she was driven away from the town.

The young man lived in the forest, where his home was a rocky boy; and in a cave nearby a lioness bore a girl-child. One day the boy and the lion-girl met in the forest and began playing. They met every day in the forest to play, and remained to love each other. There came a time when the lion-girl said:

"Tell your mother not to go fishing tomorrow. My mother is going down to the river to hunt."

The boy begged his mother not to go down to the river to fish, and said he had heard a lion growling there; but his mother did not believe him and she went down there to fish. The lioness killed her, and carried her meat home to the lion-girl. The lion-girl said:

"You have killed the boy's mother. I will not eat her meat."

"The lion-girl went to her friend, the boy, and said:

"My mother has killed your mother."

"When I must kill your mother; and then we shall live together in the cave, you and I."

The lad waited until the lioness slept, and plunged a spear into her heart. She died, and for some years the man-child and the lion-girl lived and hunted together. They learned to love each other very well. But the lad grew restless; as soon as he was a young man he went to his mother's town and said to the Chief:

"I will be your hunter: I have lived with both feet in the forest and hunt well.

The Chief agreed. The young lioness would kill deer and the hunter would take them to the Chief. He fell in love with the daughter of the Chief, but knew no way to win her. He told his lioness of this, and though she loved the young man herself she promised she would help. Soon after the Chief's daughter came down to the river, with other maidens, to bathe. The lioness sprang amongst them, roaring, and carried off the daughter of the Chief and hid her in the forest far away. The Chief sent many famous hunters to kill the lioness and recover what might remain of the girl, but all failed.

The young man went to the Chief and declared he would hunt and hunt until he found the girl; he went to where the lioness was hiding her and pretended to attack the beast,

which ran away. The girl, who was unharmed, fell in love with this brave young hunter, and the grateful Chief gladly gave her to him.

The young hunter lived inside the town, but often he would tell his wife to stay with her mother overnight, and she would go. There came a time when he told her to do this, and she answered:

"I will not go. You have a lover, and tonight I must find out who she is."

He told her he had no lover, and ordered her to go. She went to her mother; but in the night she came back to the place where her husband slept, and looking through the door she saw her man in bed with the lioness. She ran to her mother, crying:

"Oh mother, I have married a kaa-neni!"

She told what she had seen. Her mother went to look inside the hut, and reported this strange thing to the Chief. The Chief gathered hunters and warriors, and they waited outside the hut; at dawn the lioness came outside, and the men threw spears at it. The lioness fell. The hunter came out of his hut and saw the lioness lying down.

"I have died for love of you," she said, and died.

"Then both of us must die," the hunter cried in grief, and seizing his knife he plunged it to his heart. He also died. The Chief's daughter took poison, and she died.

Their spirits wander in the forest still, the young woman and the hunter, and the lioness.

HOW I WENT TO THE HOSPITAL AND I WORKED THERE AND I WILLING

In a certain town there lived a woman who was unfaithful to her husband and although her husband had died, she was still continued taking lovers. The husband's son, a young man, had said:

"Help me stop my wife from taking lovers."

"What will you give me if I do this?"

"I will give you a large sum of money."

The young man went to the doctor and said, "I have a kind of medicine made of pain oil, alcohol, and all sorts of other things, and I will give you some if you will do what I ask you. And he told the doctor what to do."

That night the husband rubbed about half a pound of this ointment on his belly.

"What are you doing?" said his wife.

"I am using a medicine to cure my pain," he said. "I have been down with this ailment for many years and I have tried all sorts of medicine but I have not been able to get any relief. And he told her the reason why he was doing this."

"I am going to a journey," he said. "I will not be home for many days. If you will give me a small amount of this medicine, I will use it."

He went away. That night the young man went to the doctor and said, "I have a kind of medicine made of pain oil, alcohol, and all sorts of other things, and I will give you some if you will do what I ask you. And he told the doctor what to do."

Now, the Wise Man had hidden himself outside the house, knowing this would happen: and now he came and said to her:

"I see your lover dead. What will you give me if I take his body from your house?"

"I will give you three hampers of corn," the woman said.

"And will you swear on your mother's grave to be a faithful wife?"

The Wise Man agreed to remove the body. In this town there was a thief accustomed to stealing kinjahs of rice at night. The Wise man placed the body in a kinjah and left it by the open door. The thief, who prowled about at night, saw the kinjah and stole it. He took it to his home and gave it to his wife. She opened it, and found a body in it.

"Eieeee!" she cried in fright. "Fool, fool! How is this? I see the dead body of the Chief's first son! We will die for this. Aieeee!"

She began softly wailing, and the thief sat down and wept. Just then the Wise Man walked in through the door.

"I see someone has killed the Chief's first son," he said. "What will you give me if I take his body from your house?"

"I will give you three hampers of cassava," said the thief.

"And will you swear on your mother's grave to be an honest man?"

The thief agreed to do this. The Wise Man tied the body in the hamper and carried it outside. He went quietly to a tree in front of the old Chief's house, and taking the body from the hamper he propped it against the tree. The Chief

was cruel and ill-tempered man and had made a law that no one in his town was to sing. So now the Wise Man hid behind the tree and he began to sing. It was a song of thieves and faithless wives whose bodies were cut up with knives. The Chief heard the song and rose from his bed in rage, although it was quite a good song, and made the thief and the adulteress tremble in their houses. He seized his bow, and from his door he shot an arrow at the figure by the tree. The arrow pierced his dead son's heart.

The Wise Man slipped away. The Chief discovered he had shot his favourite son, and on the Wise Man's good advice he swore on his mother's grave that he would henceforth let his people sing as and when they wished.

Thus it was that a Wise Man brought death to an adulterer, restored faith in a faithless wife, persuaded a thief to be honest, caused a cruel Chief to repent and filled a songless village with the songs of villagers.

HOW SPIRITS GUARDED KPADEMAI

H. Kenokai

Men tell a half-forgotten tale of a secret town called Kpademai. This town was founded by an accomplished warrior called Kpade, and thus its name means "Followers of Kpade." It lay beside a sweet stream and belonged to the Bondo Lorma clan; they were careful not to let any stranger see it, lest it be attacked.

When anyone in Kpademai died his spirit was seen slowly climbing a nearby hill called Worlor Gizi, dressed in his burial shroud; and the path which ascended the hill was kept in good repair by the spirits who lived there. These ancestral spirits were regarded with pious veneration by the townsfolk, and in return the spirits guarded the town and caused the fields to yield abundant crops.

One day a hunter from a hostile clan chanced to discover the secret town when hunting in the forest for black deer, and he reported to the council of his clan, saying the town was rich and the nearby lands were fair and fertile. The enemy clan assembled an army under the leadership of a great warrior named Tegrili, and the army marched on Kpademai.

On the first day of the battle Tegrili was captured and put to death, but the fight was on for several days until the spirits of Worlor Gizi seized and bound the hostile warriors, and killed them in such a dreadful way that the sweet-water stream was turned to blood.

Thereafter Kpademai was left in peace, and prospers still.

HOW ORPHAN WON A KINGDOM AND EXCHANGED IT FOR AN EGG

W. Monoku

Pardoo Orphan lived in a fine village, but he was the poorest of men. He had no land, no house, no clothes, not

even a cooking pot; and as he had no family no one cared for him. He begged for work and found none. He begged for food and was driven from the village.

He went to live in the forest, and his health became so poor that blindness closed his eyes and he barely lived by groping on the ground for rotten fruit and nuts. When he was nearly dead he heard a voice which said:

"Pardoo, if I help you will you promise to help me?"

"Oh yes," cried Pardoo, not knowing if the voice belonged to man or spirit. He would have promised anything to anyone—for what had he to lose?

"Then lift your face towards the sky."

Pardoo turned his face towards the sky, and some drops of burning liquid fell on his sightless eyes. Then his eyes were opened: the precious gift of sight had been restored to him, and his heart was filled with joy.

"Close your eyes, Pardoo," said the voice. Pardoo closed his eyes. "Now open them."

He saw a bright new town before him where only trees had been.

"This town is yours," the voice said.

"Thank you. But there are no people."

He was commanded to close his eyes again, and when he opened them the town was stocked with animals and people.

"You have one hundred wives," the voice went on, "five hundred slaves and a thousand warriors; and such gold as few men ever see. Go, dwell in your town and be chief."

... into his town. When he lived, Chief Parlo said, he never let his children forget that he loved his son above all other things.

One day as he was walking through the forest, he saw a white bird.

"Oh, how good," Chief Parlo said, "I will

take it home," and he took it home with him as a treasure.

"Parlo," said the bird, "I helped you once. Will you help me now?"

Parlo looked at once. He would have promised anything to this fabulous bird.

"Here is my nest," the bird went on, "I have an egg. I have no other egg, and treasure this one as you treasure your only son. But now I must leave on a long journey to another place, and wish you to take care of my egg."

Parlo promised he would guard the egg as he guarded his only son.

"If the egg should break, call upon me and I will be called on to make it whole," said the bird, "A strange and helpless thing will happen to you. Remember this, Parlo."

Parlo set guards about the tree, and the white bird flew away. The bird was gone for several days; and one day Parlo's men saw the egg in the rotten tree. He ran to his father and said he would do as he was told.

CHAPTER V THE KELLE

His father brought him a hen's egg.

"Not a hen's egg, Father," said the boy.

Pardoo brought a pigeon's egg.

"Not a pigeon's egg, Father."

Pardoo brought eagles' eggs, hawks' eggs, palm birds' eggs and crows' eggs, but none of them would do.

"Then what kind of an egg do you want?" he cried.

"I want the egg in the cottonwood tree, Father."

Pardoo turned pale. He dared not touch that egg.

"It would give you stomach pains. It is a special egg I have promised to keep safe."

The lad began to cry. He would not eat and he refused to speak to his father except to say: "If you love that egg better than you love me then just tell me so, and I'll go and live in a tree myself, somewhere in the forest. Then everyone will be sorry!"

Finally Pardoo weakened, and reluctantly agreed to break his promise. He had the egg brought to him, boiled it, and gave it to his son. His son, who had been spoiled by royal favour, just laughed and threw the egg down on the ground.

The white bird had left a little fly to watch the egg, and now the fly flew away and reported that the egg had been stolen, boiled, and broken. The great bird flew on flapping wings north to the cottonwood tree, and there it came to rest upon a branch. It stood there for a long time gazing at its empty nest, and down at Pardoo's house, and wept. Then it called Pardoo and said:

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ORIGIN OF THE SANDE SOCIETY

M. Kaine

In ages gone by there lived a woman called Sande who earned her living fishing. She was so successful that after some years there were no fish left in the rivers of that country. Hearing of a fine river in a nearby land she left her town and went there, and began to fish. The Chief of that land warned her not to walk in a certain part of the river, but suspecting that this place held many fish she took her net and went there. She sang as she threw her net again and again, and snared many fish.

While wading in the water Sande noticed a hole in the bank, and putting her hand inside she found a cooking spoon and a stirring stick. She placed them in her net. Putting her hand in the hole again she discovered a pot and a bowl, and then a bucket and a drinking cup--and then something cold and evil grasped her hand and began to drag her into the hole.

Sande cried out in a loud voice, and women in the nearby town ran to assist her. When they arrived half her body was already in the hole; they tied a rope about her waist and all began to pull. They pulled and pulled, and began to drag her out: and she dragged with her a terrible thing which held tightly to her hand.

Brave women attacked the thing, but it made fearful sounds and began to swallow the women one by one. The Zoe Women of the

town came with her magic and took the thing to a sacred bush, and called it Tor-Fahr-la. Tor-Fahr-la became the women's devil, and those who knew where and what it was, and how best to control it, became a secret society. Thus the Sande Society was organized, and named in honour of Sande who discovered Tor-Fahr-la; the ceremonies still performed within that sacred bush are known as Sande-koo to this day.

This story is criticised by the Bureau of Folkways as being inaccurate and misleading, and the following comment is offered:

"Just as a Dazoe is head of the Poro, so a Zoe is head of a Sande bush; and thus it is obvious that if a Zoe woman lived in the town as described, a Sande Society already existed there.

"Tor-Fahr-la" means sour cane leaf, and is the symbol of certain cultural societies among people from the western boundary to the St. John River: it is not, therefore, a woman's devil. It is possible that this story was told by a member of the Sande Society and was deliberately distorted to conceal certain secret facts which may not, for any reason whatsoever, be revealed to people who are not initiates of the Society."

HOW SPIRIT SOCIETIES BEGAN

A man was walking through a forest when he came upon a deserted village, and since he was far from home and night was falling, he decided to sleep in one of the village houses.

He entered the largest house and climbed into the loft, between the ceiling and the roof.

While the man was asleep the moon arose and a Gofe came into the house. A Gofe is an evil spirit belonging to a dead man. Soon after a second Gofe came, then a third and fourth, until Gofes were arriving thick and fast from every direction: for this house was their meeting place. That was why all the villagers had run away.

The noise of the Gofes talking woke the man, and when he realized he was in a spirit-house he began to fear for his life. More and more Gofes came, crowding in through doors and windows until they filled the house; then they began climbing into the loft, and the terrified man had to scramble up under the roof and hang from one of the topmost beams. Gofes overflowed the house, sat on the roof, and swarmed up nearby trees. They had their medicine pouch in the room below and began to dance around it, singing an awful spirit-song. Then they began discussing the best way to avoid Waras and Softlys. A Wara is a small animal which lives in hollow logs and makes scarey noises in the night. No one has ever seen one or knows exactly what it is, but they devour evil spirits.

A Softly is an animal like a lemur, about the size of a kitten but with strong hands which can seize and strangle even the biggest spirits; these are the two animals which evil spirits fear. But they are particularly afraid of the Wara's call.

The man hanging from the roof realized this, and began to see a way in which he might escape. He carefully cleared his throat, and above the noise which the Gofes were making he shouted:

"Oooo-WaraWaraWara!"

Which is the noise which Waras make. One of the spirits below said:

"I thought I heard the call of something."

"What kind of something?" asked a fellow-spirit. The first one shuddered and looked over his shoulder.

"It was the call of a... of a Wara!"

The spirits who heard this turned pale. Gofes, can.

"You're lying. It cannot be true. Please don't say such awful things in here."

"Then let's listen," said the first Gofe. They all listened, and in the middle of the silence the man gave a fearful cry which filled the house:

"Oooo-WaraWaraWara!"

"A Wara!" cried the Gofes. "A Wara is upon us!"

Gofes leapt down from the loft, slithered from the roof, fell from trees and threatened to burst the sides of the room below. They poured from doors and windows like beans from the mouth of a bag. Each of them wanted to escape first: and when outside they rapidly disappeared.

But in their hurry they left their precious medicine bag behind; the man found it, and in the morning he took it to his home. He built a strong fence about his house to keep out

evil strangers, and invited the members of his clan to come and use the medicine.

That was how secret Spirit Societies began among men.

THE LADY AND THE LAUSING

The Lausing, who is the Spirit of the Forest and an Evil Thing, captured a lovely maiden as she was walking along in the woods, and carried her to his home. Her brother heard of this, and swore he would not rest until he found her. Realising it would be difficult to rescue her, he sought the aid of a medicine man; the Medicine Man told him where the Lausing could be found, and added:

"Take these three eggs. When danger threatens, cast one on the ground."

The young man set forth and travelled deep into the forest to the Lausing's home, and here he discovered his sister seated on a stone beside a rooster. He could not see the Lausing.

"O sister!" he cried, "come home with me. Come quickly, while the Spirit of the Forest is away."

She wept with happiness to see him, but replied:

"The Spirit has left this rooster here to guard me. If I move from this stone the rooster will crow, and the Spirit will return at once."

Her brother threw one of the eggs upon the ground. It was full of rice, which scattered among the leaves; and the rooster began to eat the rice. Brother and sister quietly ran away while the rooster was not looking, but when he had eaten the rice and saw the girl was gone he crowed. The Lausing hurried home, and set off in pursuit of the girl and her brother.

He asked the trees which way the girl and boy had gone, and the trees pointed the way with their branches.

As they were crossing a bridge across a river the Lausing appeared behind them, bounding rapidly among the trees and filled with anger. The young man cast an egg down on the bridge and the bridge fell into the river, so that the Lausing could not easily cross. Brother and sister travelled far, then sat down on a hollow log to rest. But again the Lausing appeared, bounding rapidly among the trees, and the young man broke the third egg on the hollow log. As soon as he did this a Softly rushed out of the log growling and spitting and gnashing its teeth; it had smelled an evil spirit and was hungry.

The Softly saw the Lausing and rushed straight at him. The Lausing howled in terror, leapt to the treetops and sped across the forest to the most distant place he knew. The Softly scurried after him.

The young man and his sister travelled safely to their village; but never again did she venture into the forest alone.

A RIDDLE OF TWO WOMEN

Two rich women who lived in the same town fell in love with a poor man who lived in the forest.

The first woman built him a fine house and garden, and put cattle and goats in the nearby fields, and sent a messenger to bring him in.

The second woman went into the forest to find the poor man; she gave him rich food and wine, and brought him back to town.

Which of these two rich women deserved to have the man?

LEOPARD AND BLACK DEER

While playing in the forest Black Deer met Leopard, and finding it too late to run she begged for mercy.

"Quickly tell me three true things foremost in your mind," said Leopard, "and I will let you go."

Deer thought, "This is the first," he said. "If I return home and tell my friends I met you, they will call me a liar."

"Excellent," Leopard declared. "Go on."

"The second is that if I say you asked me riddles, they will laugh at me."

"The third is that you are not hungry anyway."

Leopard nodded in agreement, and yawned. "True, Black Deer, quite true. If I had been hungry I would have eaten

by now. You are free to go and be laughed at, and called a liar."

HOW QUILLA HUM-BUGGED A CROCODILE

In some unknown city by a river--the name was forgotten long ago--the people were so rich and lazy they spent all their time at gambling. They gambled day and night, and even animals and spirits came to join them.

A farmer whose name was Quilla came down the river in his canoe seeking land to farm; he brought his wife and baby girl with him. He built a house on the edge of the city and made his farm on the far side of the river. He also made a second canoe and taught his wife to paddle, so that she could bring him his midday food.

Quilla was a good and honest farmer.

One day a crocodile siezed the woman and her child as she was crossing the river with Quilla's noonday meal, and carried them under water. Quilla's meal time came and passed, and he grew weary and impatient; but at length he decided his wife must be sick, and he continued working until dusk.

When he went home he found the second canoe was missing, and so was his wife and child. He became alarmed. He searched for his wife in the city, he cried her name in the forest; he ran to and fro in the darkness, and his heart was heavy inside him when he found no trace of either his wife or child. He

wandered along the river bank and came to a place where he saw a curious thing.

He saw a crocodile undressed and hang its skin upon a tree; and as the crocodile-man set off towards the city to gamble it sang a little song:

"Crocodiles are clever,
Especially under water;
Weaker beasts can never
Catch a woman and her daughter."

Quilla immediately became suspicious. He stole the skin and hid it in his house, then went into the city and sat down beside the crocodile-man to gamble. The crocodile-man called himself Namol.

Namol threw the gamble three times in the air, and each time it fell to the floor he said:

"I win, as I won a man's wife and daughter today."

"What do you mean?" Quilla inquired.

"I mean what I said. Let us play."

Quilla threw the gamble into the air three times, and each time it fell to the floor he said:

"I win, as I won a crocodile's skin tonight."

Namol became excited.

"What did you say?"

"Nothing special. Let us play."

But Namol hurried off to see if his skin was safe, and when he found it gone he returned to Quilla's side and asked:

"What do you know of my skin?"

"What do you know of my wife and child?" Quilla asked, tossing the gamble again. And he sang a song:

"A crocodile is somewhat vile
To steal a woman and her child.
I know well that such a sin
May cost that crocodile his skin."

Nanol burst into tears and at once offered to bring back Quilla's wife and daughter. When he did this, Quilla gave him back his skin; and since then no crocodile has ever taken anyone without first paying for him.
Or so people say.

HOW THREE MEN SAVED A MAIDEN FROM A LAUSING

Three men fell in love with a beautiful maiden. Each man wanted to marry her, but since all of them were poor her father said:

"I shall not give my only daughter to a poor man. Go, three, and return with riches; do not return without them."

The three men went away to a distant land and worked for a powerful Chief. The Chief was pleased with their work, and when they wished to leave he gave them riches, and to each he presented a special gift.

To the first man he gave a magic mirror. By looking into the mirror one could see things happening in distant places.

To the second man he gave a magic caroe which would travel swiftly through the air to any place one wished to reach.

The third man received a magic spear which, on command, would leap to the heart of any evil creature.

Now, the beauty of this maiden which the three men sought was known far and wide, and the Lausing, or Forest Thing, decided he himself would have this girl. So from a serpent he changed himself into a handsome man, and coming to her father with many splendid gifts he asked, and was granted, permission to wed the daughter.

The wedding was arranged.

When the first man looked into his magic mirror he saw the Lausing, the dread and evil Forest Thing, was on the point of marrying the lovely maiden. He told his two companions. With the second man's magic canoe the three of them were rapidly borne over forests and rivers to the wedding place.

When they arrived the third man commanded his magic spear to leap at the heart of the Lausing. The Lausing fell dead beside the girl, and as he fell he changed back into an ugly black and yellow serpent.

The beautiful girl was saved, and in gratitude her father agreed that she should instantly marry one of the three young men. But which of them deserved her most?

HOW SPIDER'S WAIST BECAME SO THIN

Two neighbouring villages planned to hold feasts on the same day. Nan-sil, the greedy Spider, wished to attend each

feast, but did not know which one would start first. So he tied a rope around his waist and gave the free end to the chief of the first village, saying:

"When your feast is about to commence, pull this rope."

He tied a second rope about his waist, and the free end he gave to the chief of the second village, likewise telling him to pull the rope when his feast was about to begin.

Nan-sii then waited at a point halfway between the two villages; but the two feasts began at the same time, so that one chief pulled against the other chief. The ropes became tighter and tighter and Nan-sii's waist became smaller and smaller. He never did get to either of these feasts, and his waist has been narrow and squeezed-in ever since.

CHAPTER VI THE DEY AND BELLE



ORIGIN OF THE DEYS TRIBE

Fai T. Moore

According to legend a man called Baa Gaa Welon Bill was the father of the Deys; he had two sons, Baa Gaa Gbe and Baa Fai. Baa Fai was the first ~~King~~ Kan of Gawlon, or the original Grand Master of the Day degree of Poros.

These ancestors lived on Bilisue, or Cat Mountain, which is today Manba Point on Cape Montserrat; it is said that wild cats lived in this region until twenty years ago.

Baa Fai had a son called Baa Jiiwa, who went to Gawen and founded Dian Town; the place he settled in is known as Dian Kombolo. The Mambas, a Bassa tribe on the eastern side of Monrovia, also originated on Cat Mountain.

This legend, which locates the Deys' place of origin as being on the very coast, suggests that they and other members of the same maritime linguistic group came to the Green Coast by a water route. The Deys have well-formulated fishing methods and are related to the Kru, Bassa and Grebo peoples by language: they are thought to be a western extension of the Kru group. The Deys have been on the coast for several hundred years, but the date of their arrival is uncertain.

Development of salt manufacture by the Deys brought them power, wealth, and a series of wars with neighbouring tribes, particularly the Golos. As a result of warfare and inter-marriage with such tribes the Deys have lost much of their

original strength and identity, but those who remain are vigorous and progressive and have learned to reap their harvests on land as well as from the sea.

The late Elder Bala Setuma, a renowned leader of the Belon Society, once summed up his philosophy of religion in this manner:

"Koon mao bolo men ji ko se kpola bele?"

"Has a belief ever come to a people who were not non-believers?"

That is, any religion finds fertile ground in a land which lacks religion. In this he alluded to Christianity and Mohammedanism, the only two great religions with which he was familiar. Either of these two religions, he asserted, might be right; and perhaps both were wrong. God, whose existence Bala Setuma did not doubt, had his own standards by which to judge the merits of such religions; but the standards he used were wrapped in mystery and speculation, and in their arrogance both Christians and Moslems interpreted their own standards as being those of God.

God might consider the Christians were wrong, or the Moslems wrong, or both; and if he, Bala Setuma, subscribed to one of these religions he might identify himself with a lost cause. Therefore he preferred to be neutral, looking to his own heart to find what truth he could; and he was prepared to be judged accordingly.

HARE ASKED GOD FOR WISDOM

Hare went to God to ask for Wisdom.

"If am a small animal," he said, "and in the forest are many animals larger and stronger and fiercer than I, therefore I must have wisdom if I am to survive, and I beg you for this gift."

"I will see to it," said God; "but you must do three things. The first thing you must do is to bring me two of Leopard's teeth dripping with blood."

"I will try to do this," said Hare, and he hurried off wondering how this thing might be done. He invited Leopard to dinner that night, and late in the evening when Leopard yawned Hare said:

"You have very beautiful teeth, Leopard. No other animal has teeth so long and strong and white as yours."

Being vain, Leopard opened his mouth even wider, and as he did so Hare picked up a club and hit Leopard in the mouth. Two teeth fell out. Hare snatched them up and ran away before poor Leopard could recover; he went back to God and gave Him the two teeth, dripping with Leopard's blood.

"Only a wise man can take two teeth from a living Leopard," God declared. "The second thing you must do is to bring me the most poisonous snake in the forest."

Hare hurried off wondering how he could capture the most poisonous snake in the forest. He cut a long straight stick and

put marks on it, then went around the forest measuring animals. Some of the animals thought he must be a little mad, but he did not mind. The most poisonous snake in the forest saw him doing this, and asked:

"What are you doing, Hare?"

"I am measuring all the animals. God has asked me to find out who is the longest animal in the forest."

"I think I am the longest. Measure me."

Hare placed his stick beside snake. He tied snake to the stick at each end and in the middle, and said:

"You are the longest animal, snake. I will take you to see God." He carried him to God.

"Well done, Hare," said God. "Only a wise man could have brought me the most poisonous snake in the forest. Now you must bring all the little birds. That is your last task."

Hare built a strong cage and went to the little birds.

"Snake says he is going to eat you all tonight," he said. "I have made you a strong house. Sleep in there, and you will be safe."

The little birds believed him, and fearing snake they all slept in the cage that night. Hare closed the door and took the little birds to God. God smiled.

"Hare, any one who has as much wisdom as you have needs no more. Therefore go back to your place, and never ask for wisdom again."

Hare has been too clever, as people sometimes are.

THE DEATH OF IUA

The Chief of the land was Ozeku, and his daughter was the wisest of all women. Her name was Iua, and she knew all things, and such was the breadth of her wisdom that she became an oracle. The Chief announced that any man who asked a question which she could not answer would be given half the children; but if the question was well answered he would die.

Wise men come with questions, and they die.

By a river in this land a woman lived with her three sons; they were poor, and rarely had enough to eat. The oldest of the three sons said:

"Mother, I go to win half Chief Ozeku's children; I shall ask Iua such a question as even she can never answer."

"My son," said she, "think well before you go. Wiser men than you have died already."

But he went. He said to Iua:

"What causes Nofogboi, the yard snake, to bite a man?"

The meaning of this was: What is the common cause of a man's misfortune? Iua answered him:

"Because Nyimi, the black snake, hangs something on that man's throat." This meant: Because a man is often betrayed by the loose tongue of a friend.

The eldest of the three sons died. The second son then came and said:

"Before God we are fools. What causes the vanity of men?"

Tua answered him:

"Tintala the cricket depends on heat to give a Bolon cry, and all heat comes from God." The Bolon cry is a signal used by the Poro Society; and the answer meant: Men depend on emotion when they boast, and man's emotions are made by God. The question had been answered, and the second son died.

The youngest of the three sons then begged his mother that he might go to Tua, but she would not let him go.

"If you want to be killed I would rather see you die before my eyes," she said, "than think of you lying dead in a distant place."

He begged her day and night for permission to go to Tua, and after many weeks she grew weary and resigned to his early death.

"If you must go, my only son, then go, but unwillingly I say it. Your brothers have died and so will you, and there will be nothing left."

She made dough from crushed corn and cooked it with strong poison, and gave it to him for food along the way: for she would rather bury him herself than have him die in a distant place. The young man set out with his dog, and when he came to the river nearby he sat down to wait for the ferry-canoe to come. He took out the corn cake and gave a piece to his dog. The dog ate, and died.

"Dead?" the young man muttered. "Is this an omen?" It would seem to be an evil one."

He put the dog in the canoe. An eagle flew down and alighted on the floating body. Bird and dog drifted down the river out of sight. The young man went to Tua, and he said:

"Dough killed dog, and the deal carried the living. What does this mean?"

Tua considered the question for three days, and could find no answer. The third son lived, for the death of his dog had saved him. Chief Ozoku gave him half his lands, and he mourned for his brothers but lived in peace and plenty with his mother till she died.

HOW A FISHER-BOY BECAME A CHIEF

A fisherman called Naga lived near the sea with his wife, and they had a son called Boi. Boi was their only child and they loved him with all their hearts.

When hungry season came Naga went forth each day to fish in the sea from his canoe, for at this time there was little food to be had on land. There came a time when he fished for many days and caught no fish, and his family was starving; but since he knew no other trade he kept on fishing, hoping that his luck would change.

One weary day when he had fished for many hours in vain he began quietly weeping. A mermaid swam close to his canoe,

"I have heard you weeping," she said. "What is your sorrow?"

"Bad luck is with me, and my family starves," said Naga. He was not at all surprised to see a mermaid. He would have been

astonished if she had been a fine fat fish.

"What will you give me if I change your luck?" she asked.

"Anything you want."

"Will you give me the first creature who comes to meet you when you reach the shore tonight?"

'That will be my little dog,' Nagu thought to himself.

The dog always ran barking down the beach to greet him. He was fond of the animal.

"Well," he said reluctantly, "I will do that."

The mermaid disappeared, and thereafter every time Nagu cast his net he snared a multitude of fish so that his canoe was soon quite full. He rejoiced and set out for his home, and when he drew close to the beach his son came down to meet him, Boi, his only son. Nagu remembered his promise to the mermaid, and his heart was sick with despair. That night when his family was feasting happily he could not hide his grief, and was obliged to tell them of the promise which he had given in return for the load of fish.

"If you go to the mermaid, son," he said, "she will destroy you."

"Then I will leave the coast," Boi said. "I will go out into the world and see what fortune life holds for me."

"My blessing goes with you, my son. Be careful crossing water, for the mermaid will not rest until she gets you."

Boi set out into the world next morning. He travelled far. Rather than cross broad rivers he kept among the mountains, where the rivers are young and clear and held no secrets. In the high

place he came upon an eagle, an ant and a lion who were quarrelling over the body of a deer. They saw Boi and said to him:

"Man, please divide this deer for us. We can reach no agreement."

Boi gave the red meat to lion, the offal to eagle, and the bones with their sweet marrow he gave to ant; and the three of them were pleased.

"You are good," said lion. "Take this claw of mine. If you should ever find yourself in danger just say 'from a man to a lion', and you will become a lion."

"You are wise," said eagle. "Take this feather of mine. If you find yourself in some strange trouble just say 'from a man to an eagle', and you will become an eagle."

"You are kind," said ant. "Take my blessing. If you ever wish to be a small, small thing just say 'from a man to an ant', and you will become an ant."

Boi travelled on until he came to a fair country, and here he entered the service of the Chief as a herdsman. In this land there dwelt a monster, and the only way to keep it from destroying towns and crops was for the Chief to give one of his children to the monster every month. No man could kill the monster, and the people of that land now lived in fear, for the Chief had but one child left. She was the best and most beautiful of his daughters, and as she was his favourite he had kept her while he could.

Boi changed into an ant. He drew close to the monster and asked:

"Mighty monster, is it true that no man can kill you?" The proud creature laughed. "Who wants to kill me must climb Garto Mountain; and kill a lion, then catch the eagle there, and bring the eagle's egg and burst it on my head."

Boi went away and considered this: and when he saw the Chief's only remaining child was the most beautiful young maiden he had ever seen, he made up his mind. That night he entered her room as an ant and then resumed his normal form. She was astonished to see him there, but since he was a handsome youth with gentle manners she was not alarmed.

"Why have you come?" she asked. "My father must not see you here, or he will kill you!"

As he gazed upon her beauty he fell more and more in love; and she, in turn, was drawn strongly to him.

"Next month you must die," he said, "Unless the monster is somehow killed; and I possess a secret whereby he may be killed. Give me strength to do the things which must be done."

"How shall I give you strength?"

"Give me your love, and I shall not fail."

She looked into his eyes, and was content with what she saw. She rose and went to him. "I give you my love," she said. "Be strong, be brave; I know you will not fail."

In the morning Boi changed to an eagle and flew to the summit of Garto Mountain; and there he changed into a lion. He met a lion there, and they fought; and after several hours of savage, snarling battle Boi found that he had won. He rested for a while and bathed his wounds; then he changed into an eagle

and flew into the sky to fight the eagle he saw there. Three times this eagle battered him to earth: each time Tot remembered the love which the daughter of the Chief had given him, and found the strength to rise and fight again. Finally he killed his enemy; he tore its bowels open, and with the egg he found he wearily flew back to find the monster. When he found it he cried out:

"Ho, monster! I come from Gasto Mountain, where I took an egg from the belly of an eagle, and now I am about to throw it on your head!"

The monster ran round and round in the forests trying to escape, but Tot dropped the egg on his head and destroyed him.

Tot wedded the Chief's daughter and inherited rich lands, and sent for his own parents to come and live with him. But the mermaid still searches for him, and this is why sometimes a handsome lad who goes to sea in his canoe does not return.

THE FISHING CAN LARK

O. Masgrave

Two hunters went into the forest one night with spears, and a burning candle to light their night. They went to a place where animals come at night to drink, hid themselves in bushes and put out their fire stick. They held their spears in readiness and listened intently. In a little while they heard an animal say:

"I smell hot charcoal."

"You're always smelling something," said another.

The two hunters flung their spears in the direction of the voices: but when they looked they found they had only speared two trees. They marvelled that this should be--for surely it had not been the two trees which they heard talking.

They heard the voice again, as soft as a baby's sigh:

"If you listen, you can hear the forest talk."

And of course you can.

THE ANTBAG AND THE HUNTER

A. E. Cooper

There is a little animal called Antbag who lives in the palmtree. It has a long tail and a round body, and rolls up into a tight round ball when an enemy approaches.

One day a hunter went out to hunt meat, and he took his hunting dog with him. The dog had bells tied around his neck, and the ringing of the bells would show which way the dog was running in the forest: for the hunter was a suspicious man, and did not trust his dog.

When the dog spied the Antbag up in the tree he barked and barked and rang his bells, calling to his master; and the Antbag became afraid and rolled itself up into a ball. When the hunter came he glanced up into the tree but could not see an animal, for the Antbag looked like a bunch of nuts; and

he scolded the dog, called it a fool, and went to hunt in another place.

But the dog continued barking, and another hunter came; this second hunter gazed long and carefully into the tree, then saw the Antbag there and shot it. He gave the dog his share and went away; and the dog rejoined his hungry master with a belly-full of meat.

Senseless men will often scorn the sense of faithful friends.

THE TERRIBLE END OF CATFISH

Catfish and Rice Bird were once firm friends. One day Rice Bird said:

"I just saw a farmer cut a hole in the top of a palmwine tree, to catch wine in a bowl. Let us go and steal some."

"It would be nice," Catfish agreed, "I am tired of always drinking the same old thing. But you know I cannot fly."

"I will lend you feathers," Rice Bird said.

He gave Catfish almost half his feathers, and they managed to fly up to the top of the wine palm, where they drank wine. Then Catfish returned to the river, and gave Rice Bird back his feathers. Thereafter they would fly up to the palm and drink whenever they wished.

There came a time when they drank too much. They became very, very drunk, so drunk that they could hardly move, and while they were lying in the bowl the owner of the wine came.

He began to climb the tree. Catfish and Rice Bird stopped their singing and listened. The farmer climbed closer. They became scared. Rice Bird knew that he could not fly now with only half his feathers, for he was too foolish and full of wine: so he pulled his feathers from Catfish, despite the tearful protests of his friend, and managed to flutter away.

Poor Catfish lay there helplessly in the bowl, sobbing and sobbing. The farmer found him there, and was so astonished to find a fish in his winebowl at the top of a palm that he almost fell down again. But eventually he just shrugged, carried Catfish home and put him in a pot to cook.

As Catfish was cooking he sadly sang a song:

"Sometimes a friend
Does not intend
To help one faithfully
Those with such friends
Will meet their ends
And terrible ends they'll be."

THE MAIDEN WHO WEDDED A SEA-DEMON

E. Harris

Old men tell of a noble chief who possessed a daughter of surpassing grace and beauty, and called Tola. She was a maiden both talented and fair, as lovely as a rising moon and tutored well in wifely skills, as was the custom of those

times; but, over-proud of her perfection and deaf to her father's wish, she refused to marry any man with a spot or blemish on his skin.

Her father sent messengers and envoys to countries near and far, searching for a perfect man to mate his perfect daughter; from far and near came princes, chiefs, the sons of chiefs, great warriors and youths of noble birth to suffer close inspection and in turn be turned away. Many tried to hide their defects but in this they failed: for Tola had a devoted brother, as warped and ugly as she was beautiful, and out of love for her he would change himself into a fly and spy the imperfections of her suitors.

She refused them one and all, for all who came had sores, or moles, or wounds, or warts, or other and worse things. And the rate of unrequited love gnawed the hearts of those who saw her.

A leman who dwelt in the ocean depths heard of Tola's exceeding loveliness, and made up his mind to have her. Using guile and fire persuasion he borrowed the soft and flawless skin of the Sea Goddess herself, and with a long canoe fully laden with such treasures as pearls and precious shells and sands of gold he journeyed to the shore.

When she heard another rich and handsome man had come to seek her hand, Tola sent her brother (as a fly) to see if this new stranger had spots, or sores, or birthmarks. Her brother found the stranger preparing himself to meet the Chief, dressing himself in costly clothes and ornaments and

anointing himself with the fragrant juices of sweet herbs. The fly buzzed around and around, searching the suitor's arms and legs, belly and chest and back for even the smallest blemish; but the skin of the Sea Goddess had none, and in deep wonder the ugly brother returned to his sister to report.

"O Sister," he announced, "this stranger's skin is perfect. There is no pimple, spot, or any mark. His skin is whole and pure, and beautiful to see!"

"Then he is the first," she said, and calmly added: "I shall marry him."

But her brother was wise beyond his years, and devotion for her sharpened his natural wit.

"Beloved sister," he began, "take care! Take time! There is something strange about this man I cannot yet define. He has an evil air. I feel he is...."

"Be quiet!" she commanded with quick temper. "Who are you to judge a perfect man, or speak against him? A crooked, twisted, hare-lipped creature such as you should learn to keep his place. And besides, "in wistful and more gentle tones, "I have been maiden long enough."

The demon from the sea entered the Chief's great court, splendidly dressed and bearing fine presents for the Chief; and sadly the old man listened to the young and handsome suitor. At length he said:

"O man, it seems to me you are a fine and worthy fellow; but my daughter will not have you. She is a proud and disobedient girl, and nothing I can say will help you. She

will not marry you, or any other man."

But at that moment Tola came, straight and slender as a palm, exquisite as a dewdrop flaming with dawn's early light.

"O Father, who is this man?"

"He is a prince from a distant land, my daughter, come with the finest gifts and asking for your hand."

When she saw the demon to be more than twice as handsome as those who came before, her heart was made light with sudden love and she said at once:

"Then give my hand, O Father, and let him marry me!"

The Chief rose from his seat in joy to embrace both his daughter and the demon. He shouted for his heralds, and proclaimed a Day of Days. He seated the stranger at his side and sent urgent messengers through the land to lesser chiefs to attend a Week of Weeks; the city dressed in gaiety and splendour for a festival surpassing any festival which ever went before. From towns and villages men came with gifts, hunters searched the forests for red meat, palms were tapped for wine, great cooking fires appeared and the leading dancers and musicians of the land were summoned to perform.

Thus it was that the lovely Tola was married to the demon from the Under Sea. And her ugly brother grieved alone, and wondered what it was which made him grieve.

Now, some men lie and others shuffle words, but this I say in truth; the joyful Chief gave the married couple one whole river with its valley, cattle and goats which ten men could not count, and not one town but two whole towns of

servants. And yet in a week and a day the pair departed on their journey to the stranger's 'distant land'.

They travelled down to the coast and entered the demon's long canoe, with silver and gold and treasures which the Chief had given them; and as he paddled to sea with his bride the demon sang a song:

"Pa Ma wei lei, ma ya pa;

Pa Ma a lei!"

The name of the demon was Pa Ma, and the song he sang was:

"Pa Ma is going, going far away;

Pa Ma sings farewell, forever!"

And every time he came to the 'wei' part he paddled more strongly, as people do, so that the canoe sped swiftly and more swiftly out to sea.

When they were far at sea and winds began brushing water from the waves, he said magic words and the ocean opened to them: much to Tola's horror and despair the canoe descended among frightful shadows and sliny things which crawled and slithered; the demon shed the soft silken skin of the Sea Goddess.

He was hideous to look upon, a scaley thing with cruel eyes. Tola shrank from him in fear and disgust and tried to run away: but with scabby claws he seized her, dragged her to the entrance of a silent cave, and into the dismal shadow-world inside.

Nights passed. Night succeeded night, for in the Under Sea there are no days, there is not sufficient light. The

daughter of the noble Chief existed in mortal fear of the ugly demon, and of the shadowy shapes which watched her every move. Her one friend was the mother of the demon, who one day said to her:

"Child, you are both beautiful and tender-hearted; what are you doing here? Why did you come? My son is cruel and wicked, much more so than I: many are the girls he has lured here from the land...and he has destroyed and devoured them all. Surely this will be your fate. I fear for you!"

From this moment the poor bride lived in hourly fear of death; she wept, she sobbed, she prayed, she would not eat; and then, after days of sobbing, weeping, praying and not eating, a fly buzzed gently by her face.

A fly? But there were no flies in the Under Sea. She ceased her weeping and looked up to find her ugly little brother standing by her side. Her eyes grew wide in wonder and delight.

"Oh, beloved brother! Oh, how did you ...?"

"Hush, let us waste no time," he urged her. "I travelled with you in the canoe, for I feared something evil might happen to you. I have discovered the demon's magic box. The canoe is waiting. It is time to go!"

She rose and went with him. Hand in hand they ran through dark tunnels curtained with waiving seaweed, through rocky places where sea-animals on thin logs clicked and scuttled, and past the gaping mouths of caves, and came to the canoe. Her brother had stolen the demon's box of magic secrets, and

now as they sat in the canoe he said certain magic words and the canoe bore them up to the ocean surface. They paddled to land singing the demon's song backwards, and every time they came to the 'wei' part they paddled more strongly than before, as people do, so that the canoe sped swiftly and more swiftly to shore.

So it was that they made their way back to their own land, where they were received with great rejoicing. The Chief's family held a long and happy palaver and Tola married a loyal and devoted warrior of her father's choice. She bore many sons; and she loved and respected her ugly, twisted little brother for the strength of his heart and the power of his chivalry.

THE TWO CRIPPLES WHO DECIDED ON SUICIDE

R. Y. Collins

In a village there dwelt two young men, one of whom was blind and the other lame. As companions in adversity they would sit together in the market place and beg for food; but the more fortunate villagers ordered them to leave and find their living in another place.

The blind man used his sound legs to carry his friend into the forest, and the lame man used his eyes to direct

his companion along the road. When hunger came to them the lame man saw a bowl of palm oil in a tree, and instructed his blind friend to climb up and steal it.

The blind man climbed the tree and took the bowl, but fell with it, so that the two men were soaked in the stolen oil: and they discussed what they should do.

"If people find us they will kill us," said one, "for we have stolen oil."

"It is little difference whether we are killed or starved to death," observed the other.

"Ours will be ^acruel and bloody death," the first insisted, "if people find us here."

"Then since we must die anyway, let us drown ourselves."

They both agreed to this, and went down to the river.

When the lame man saw the dark and uninviting waters he felt afraid; but he also saw a large stone at his feet, and said to his companion:

"I will be the first to jump into the river."

"Well and good," the blind man said. "I bid you fond farewell; we will meet in heaven or in hell."

The lame man then took the heavy stone and threw it in the river. There was a loud splash, and then silence. The blind man waited for some time, and a thought came to his mind: when a man drowns in a river one usually hears the sounds of struggling; yet I have heard but a single splash. Has my friend jumped in, or did he only cast a stone? I do not wish to die alone.

Now, the Spirit of the river was looking on this scene with some amusement, but neither of the men could know this. The blind man heard a slight sound at his side, and beat in that direction with his stick. He hit his friend. They started fighting. They rolled about upon the river bank, scratching, hitting, kicking, biting, till dust arose in clouds and small creatures fled in fear. The River Spirit laughed and laughed, for such a thing he had not seen in years; and with a word he gave the blind man sight, and healed the lame man's legs.

When the two men realized what had taken place they were once more friends; they returned to their village and laboured side by side for a whole year. The fruit of their labours they offered as a giant sacrifice on the river bank, and lived in happiness and wealth until they died.

THE BELLE

The Belle are sandwiched between the Loma, Gola and Bandi tribes in the northwest Liberian hinterland, and though this tribe is well isolated from the Kru group in general, the Bureau of Folkways describes the language and customs of the Belle as bearing a distinct resemblance to those of the Kru tribes to the south and east. There is other equally convincing evidence that the Belle are blood-brothers of the Kru, Grebo, Bassa, Krahn and Dey, and indeed it is said that the founder

of the Belle tribe was a great Bonga hunter.

THE WAY OF A WOMAN'S TONGUE

D. M. Longs

A certain hunter was married to a lazy and quarrelsome woman whose acid tongue made him most unhappy. His meals were always dirty and the children were never clean. The hunter searched the forests every day for food and meat, but his lazy wife was never satisfied and her tongue was always wagging.

"Good-for-nothing-fool!" she would rant, "I-work-my-fingers-to-the-bone-cooking-food-and-and-cleaning-house-and-you-never-thank-me-you-just-idle-in-the-forests-I'm-sick-and-tired-of-work-I-wish-you'd-~~find~~ find-and-another-wife-to-do-the-work-we-need-another-woman-in-the-house."

The hunter agreed to find another wife and he went visiting the young girls, but all of them seemed to be already promised to other men. Discouraged, he returned to his wife and admitted he had failed; she scolded him and jeered at him, saying the young girls showed good sense in refusing to marry such a worthless man.

The hunter was annoyed, both by his own failure to find a second wife and by the bitterness of his woman's tongue. He began staying away from home longer and longer, and going further and further each day into the forest. One day he sat to rest beneath a tree and said:

"Oh, I wish I had a better woman. Is it better to live

in misery or to lie down dead in peace?"

One of the Forest Spirits heard the hunter's wish, and since he was a good and honest man she appeared before him in a gree-gree bush, in her usual monkey form.

"You see I am a monkey," said the Spirit to the hunter.

"So I see. Yes indeed, it is a monkey which I see."

The monkey shivered and grew misty, and slowly changed into a maiden--such a rare and lovely maiden that the hunter's heart swelled and swelled with sudden love.

"I would like to be your wife," she said, but I fear the shame that you might bring on me by telling people I am just an ape."

"I swear I would not!" cried the hunter. "Oh, promise to be my wife and I swear I will not tell a single person!"

"Then I will be your wife," she said. "Your second wife, I know. But if you should ever tell my secret you will lose me...Give me a kola nut; that will be your gift to me."

The hunter quickly found her a kola nut, and she kept it. Her Zoe name was Kehn, but her common name was Tabe, which means yam. In great happiness the hunter took her home and showed her to his wife.

"This girl has agreed to be my second wife," he said. "Be kind to her."

"Where did you get her?" asked his wife.

"She comes from another place. You asked me to take another wife to help you. This is she."

"But where did you get her?"

"From somewhere else, not here. She will help you with your work. Be kind to her."

The hunter would not tell his wife where he had found Tabe; and the girl herself refused to say anything about it. But in all other ways she was willing and obedient: she cooked food well, cared for her husband's children, cleaned the house and planted rice. The head-wife was lazy and did nothing. She passed her days abusing and scolding the beautiful young Tabe while the hunter was away, and every night she asked her husband where he had found his second wife.

One evening she prepared palm wine and gave it to him to drink, and when they went to bed she was nice to him and made him happy, which was not a usual thing. Again she asked him what the secret was, and finally he told her.

"She was a monkey in the forest, but changed into a girl."

When several days had passed and Tabe was busy pounding dumboy in a mortar, the headwife kicked over a bowl of rice and snapped:

"Woman, pick up that rice!"

Tabe gathered the rice.

"Now scratch my back!"

Tabe scratched her back.

"Now wipe my breath from the air!"

Tabe hesitated, and then asked:

"Good woman, how can I wipe your breath from the air?"

The woman became angry.

"You-useless-stupid-fool-a-girl!" she scolded. "I-slave-and-drudge-and-work-my-fingers-to-the-bone-but-how-can-I-possibly-run-the-house-when-my-worthless-husband-insists-on-bringing-monkeys-into-the-home?"

The beautiful Tabe gave a terrible cry of despair and ran into the forest. When the hunter came home he asked:

"Woman, where is Tabe?"

"She has gone into the forest to be idle, as usual," she said. The hunter saw a kola nut lying on the ground. It was an old nut, and looked familiar.

"Whose is this kola nut?" he asked.

Then the hunter knew at once what had happened. He slew his wife with a single blow and went into the forest to search for Tabe. He asked all the monkeys if they had seen her, but they only chattered and cracked nuts. The hunter wandered through the forest for many days and nights, and then died of a broken heart.

Never slip a woman's tongue to rest, for women's tongues hate lace and run about.

MONKEYS ARE FOUND ON THE GULLING

H. J. Dennis

When hungry season came Spider and his wife grew very thin. One day as Spider was searching for food in the forest he came on a little stream, and here he met a man who said:

"If you whistle the song of the Pepper Bird three times I will supply you with all the food you want, and you can come here as often as you wish. But never eat the kernel of a palm nut here."

Spider quickly whistled the Pepper Bird's song three times, and all kinds of food appeared before him. He ate and ate till he could eat no more, then went home empty-handed and abused his wife because she had no food for him.

Spider went to the stream two or three times every day; he became fat, and his wife wondered why. She sought the advice of a medicine man, and the medicine man told her what she should do.

She boiled a piece of elephant skin, and when she gave it to her husband she said an elephant had been killed in a distant place. Greedy Spider ate the skin and hurried away to find the elephant, for elephant meat is good to eat and grows in large quantities. While he was away his wife went to the stream, on the medicine man's advice, and whistled the song of the Pepper Bird three times. She filled her house with food, then broke the magic law by eating the kernel of a palm nut near the stream.

Spider searched for days and found no elephant, for the simple reason that there was no elephant to find, and half crazy with hunger he hurried to his home. When he came to the stream he whistled the song of the Pepper Bird three times, but nothing happened. He whistled more loudly. He whistled as loudly as he possibly could, but the stream just sang its

sons and nothing happened.

Spider sadly went home and begged his wife for food; but as her children had died from hunger several days before she was feeling very angry with her husband. She beat him with a stick and he ran away. She told him never to come back. Early next morning Spider lay down outside the house, pretending to be dead. His wife found him, and thinking he was dead she buried him a little way from the kitchen. Spider lay in the ground until night fell, then climbed inside the kitchen and ate all the food he could.

He did this every night until his wife began to wonder who was stealing the food at night. She went to the medicine man, and on his advice she made a boy from beeswax and left him in the kitchen. Spider came again that night, and as he was eating he saw the boy.

"What are you doing in here?" he demanded. "Are you a thief?"

The wax boy did not answer, so Spider slapped his face. Spider's hand stuck. He tried to get his hand free, but his other hand stuck too, and so did all his feet. He was still there in the morning when his wife came. She seized a stick and thrashed him until he bled, but finally he managed to struggle free of the wax and scurried up the wall of the hut to hide high in the ceiling.

And Spider is still there today, catching flies and insects, frightened to come down.

SPIDER, LEOPARD, AND LIGHTNING BUG

S. Mitchell

Leopard is fond of fish, and once he built a water fence across a stream and set fish traps therein. With this simple but clever device he caught many fish, and hunger was a stranger to his house. It happened that Spider heard of this, and one night he called on Lightning Bug.

"I know of a place," he said, "where we can find many fish, and easily, but they must be caught at night. Therefore bring your light, and let us go."

Lightning Bug agreed to this, and they went to the water fence.

"These are Leopard's traps," said Lightning Bug.

"Fish belong to those who find them," Spider answered.

They collected all the fish and went away; but Spider, being greedy, gave very few to Lightning Bug. Each night for a week they went to the traps, and finally there came a night when Spider decided to keep all the fish for himself. Lightning Bug protested, but Spider held to his decision; therefore the little fly resolved to teach some manners to his greedy friend. With his light he led him to Leopard's house, and Spider, thinking it was his own, walked in through the door and said:

"O wife, here are some more of Leopard's fish."

Then he saw Leopard sitting by the fire, staring at him with big eyes; and Leopardess lying on the bed, staring at him

with big eyes; and the two young leopards, who had ceased their playing and were staring at him with small-big eyes. Leopard rose to his feet and cleared his throat.

"So you are the thief?" he growled. Spider trembled with fear, and dropped the fish. He moved quietly towards the door, and Leopard sprang. He missed his mark, and Spider scurried out of the house and fled into the night: and not daring to go home he went far into the forest and made a house of banana leaves. He lived in the forest for some time, and one day Leopard chanced to find the house. He looked carefully at the leaves, walked twice around the house, and sniffed inside it. No one was at home.

"It must be Spider's home," he said. "Fat, lazy, thieving Spider. I will wait for him. We shall have a talk." He crept inside the house and waited for Spider to return. But Spider saw the marks of Leopard's feet, and noticed that the marks led into his banana-leaf house and did not come out again. He thought that Leopard might be waiting inside for him, so he went a little way off and cried out:

"Ho, my banana-leaf house!"

There was, of course, no answer.

"Ho, my banana-leaf house!"

Spider waited a little while, and then remarked quite loudly:

"Here is a strange thing. Every day when I come home I call to my little house, and it answers me. But today it does not answer. Can it be because some enemy is inside? I will try

again...."Oh, my banana-leaf house!"

Leopard cleared his throat and tried to say in a banana-leaf voice:

"Ho, Spider, welcome home!"

Spider laughed and laughed, for now he knew for certain that Leopard was in his house.

"Just sit there, foolish Leopard," he called out. He ran far, far away until he came to the house of Man; and since Leopard could not come here he crept inside and there he lived, and still lives to this day.

WHY BRIDGES ARE BUILT IN SECRET

L. Nelson

Long before white men were known in the land there lived a rich woman by the name of Sagba Massa. Sagba possessed a certain magic ring which she always wore on her hand; with this ring she could summon and control the power of spirits and forest devils, and her clan, whom she ruled, prospered accordingly. Her lands yielded abundant crops, rain fell when rain was needed, and evil beings who walked in the night left her people alone.

The Chief of Sagba's tribe, a wise old man called Mana Kpaka, sent messages through the land requiring lesser chiefs and clan leaders to assemble at his town for a conference concerning tribal welfare. Sagba Massa set out on her journey to

this town, and on the way she was obliged to cross the Yaajah River. While crossing in a canoe she saw a beautiful woman sitting on a rock, and wondered who she was. A moment later the woman disappeared, and Sagba, whose hand was trailing lightly in the water, suddenly felt her magic ring drawn gently from her finger.

She cried out in alarm and peered down into the shining water, but saw nothing there. The beautiful woman who sat on the rock had been a river spirit, and doubtless it was she who had stolen the precious ring. Sagba made camp on the river bank and called up her best diviners to discover what she must do: the diviners read their sands and gave her their advice.

Three men were brought from distant places. One of them had power over water. The second had power over light and could see into the very hearts of mountains. The third had power over earth, and could crush the biggest rocks to powder in his hands. Sagba Massa paid them well and commanded them to find her ring.

The first man tipped the river on its side.

The second man saw the ring hidden within a rock which lay on the river bed.

The third man lifted the rock and broke it, and having found the ring he gave it back to Sagba. She went to the conference called by Mana Kpaka, and when returning she decided to build a bridge across the Yaajah River, a bridge which would nowhere touch the water.

With the aid of her ring a number of spirits were summoned and they were told to build a bridge from bank to bank in such

a way that men who crossed might be beyond the reach of mischievous river spirits. The spirits said they would work by night, but men must work by day. Trustful men were called upon to build the bridge by day; and the spirits threw building medicine on them so that they would build well and make no error. The spirits selected two large trees on opposite banks, and swung stout lines of cane and vines across the river from tree to tree; but they only worked by night, when no one was about. The men used secret knots and the cunning of their medicine to weave a slender foot-walk between the hanging lines; they only worked by day, and no man who was not one of them was permitted to be there.

Thus the first suspension bridge was built, and now the manner of this work is a closely guarded secret handed on from father to son. The secret is only known to spirits and selected groups of men, and anyone else who tries to watch is killed.

HOW THE KING OF THE MONKEYS BECAME THEIR SLAVE

B. Johnson

When the world was made all the various kinds of animals had their kings, but the monkeys were so foolish and disobedient that Skygod gave them a special king called Quilpu-nine. Quilpu-nine was a bird with grey hair on his head: Skygod placed him in a hole in the ground where nobody could see him.

The monkey-people were afraid of the Thing-in-the-hole-in-the-ground; since no one had ever seen it and its voice was so

loud and harsh, it was thought to be some powerful devil-god and all the monkeys respected and obeyed him. It was the custom of those times for the animals to render tribute to their kings, giving their best food to them and honouring them with gifts; so Quilpu-nine lived well, growing sleek and fat on nuts and succulent fruits and the choicest of forest fare.

But there came a time of famine in the forest, and although the monkey-people tried to bring rich foods to Quilpu-nine as usual, they found this increasingly difficult to do. In time the grey-haired bird came to feel the famine too, and one day when the older monkeys were away searching for last season's nuts and withered fruit he came forth from his hole and stole the little food the monkey-children had.

When the monkey-fathers and monkey-mothers came back to their homes and children they were astonished to learn that their king was merely a grey-haired bird: they pulled him from his hole, and he was obliged to be their slave. One can often hear the monkey-people laughing in the forest, and that is because they still remember that a grey-haired bird called Quilpu-nine was formerly their king.

THE DESMODE AND THE DEER

A. Ninley

Deer had her home in a pleasant forest glade close to a tall Desmode, or Dicot tree. No grass grew near the Desmode, and the

ground there was quite bare; one Day Deer saw that her tracks were plainly visible on this bare ground, and fearing a hunter might notice them she said to the Desnode:

"Good friend, please cover my tracks with your leaves."

The Desnode refused to do this.

"I beg you, cover my tracks. Some hunter may see them there and know this place to be my home, and so kill me."

"Whether you live or die is no concern of mine," the Desnode said.

"Then so be it," the Deer exclaimed. "But that thing which kills me will kill you too."

"You are foolish, Deer," said an Owl bush nearby, "and your life is shadowed by foolish fears. No hunter will come here."

"Men eat animals," Deer protested, "and they also cut down trees. If my tracks betray us all, then don't blame me."

Some days later a hunter discovered the tracks of Deer, and he saw that she walked often, and slept, close to the Desnode. He waited in hiding, and killed Deer when she came, then carried the meat and the skin back to his town. The Chief there said:

"That is a very fine skin you have. Let a tree be cut, and we will make a drum."

"O Chief," the hunter said, "there is a Desnode at the place where I killed the deer, and the wood of Desnode is fine for making drums."

"Such wood holds a pleasant tone," the Chief agreed. "Then let this Desnode be cut." Woodsmen went to cut the Desnode tree,

and noticed the Oweh bush nearby. They said:

"We also must have rosin, to rub on the skin of the drum. Let us take this Oweh bush, for the rosin it has is good."

The Oweh bush was also cut and taken to town with the Desmode. The drum was made, using the skin of Deer, the wood of Desmode, and the rosin of Oweh bush. Deer quarrelled with Desmode and Oweh and abused them both: and when the drum was beaten the echoes of their quarrel filled the air.

THE REASON WHY CHICKENS SCRATCH

V. Ricks

Yala the Lion was king of the animals in the time when all animals lived together in peace. During a time of great famine when everyone was starving, Yala decreed that the bodies of those who died should be cooked and eaten by the living, in order that the living might survive.

Grandmother Chicken was the first to die, and the chickens mourned her passing but looked forward to the feast. The body of Grandmother Chicken was cooked by the other animals, and since her body was so small a quantity of cornhusks was added to the meat. Hearing of this, the chickens' share with a liberal pile of husks before giving it to them.

The chickens took their share, and wondered why their bowl was full of husks: they could see no meat. For a little time they pecked at the husks, pausing often to glance at the

CHAPTER VII THE VAI



gravy and meat the animals had, and finally in disgust they gave their bowl to Jackal. Jackal knew where the meat was: he scratched away the husks and ate the richer fare he found beneath, while the chickens watched amazed.

Ever since that day all chickens have taught their children to search beneath everything they ate, telling them that the best things of life are often well concealed.

HOW PISO LAKE BECAME

In the days of long ago there was a certain small waterhole where doves went to bathe, and the Vai people who lived near that place called it Piling See, or Doves' Hole. More and more doves came to sing and splash, so that the pools became crowded and other holes were made. Every time the Big Rains came the holes would become larger, and at length they were all joined together as a lake. Through many generations the name Piling See has turned into Piso.

The lake has several islands. The smallest one is known as Poo, meaning Pigeon, for the colony of pigeons which lives there.

Kafatin Island is in the middle of the lake; a certain Vai source states that when canoes coming down to the sea reached this island the crews would rejoice, for half the trip was done; they would exclaim 'Kafa', meaning 'Halfway'. However, the Bureau of Folkways points out that Kafa in Vai means 'over and above', or 'to cheat a person', so this theory of name-origin is open to doubt.

The father of the islands is a sacred island named Boeba, "Owner of the World". Boeba moves about the lake as it wishes, and if a canoe chances to be on the lake when the island moves, canoe and crew are lost forever in the waters. If anyone points a finger at this sacred island he dies at once. No canoes go to it, and anyone who defiles the waters near it disappears immediately. Boeba is feared and respected, and left very much alone.

Masatin Island is the largest of all and has its name from Masa, the first woman to farm on it.

In former times Piso Lake had a fine strong voice for singing songs; on peaceful evenings it would sing a soft and gentle song, but when the winds roared and lightning fired the sky the waves of Piso Lake boomed against the shore with rich bass overtones and lesser waves drummed mellow modulations.

There came a day when the Sea Goddess lay dying and the sea, who had no voice, begged the nearby lake to lend its song so that the Goddess might be properly mourned. The lake consented, and her song was transferred to the sea. But the song was so sweet and beautiful it revived the ailing Sea Goddess, and then the cunning sea refused to give it back, declaring she had borrowed it to mourn the death of the Goddess and would not give it back until the Goddess died.

So Piso Lake sang no more, but her song is heard throughout the breadth of oceans, causing men to wonder at the multitude of doves which swim and sing in the wreathlike sea long ago.

HOW HARE MADE A FOOL OF LEOPARD

L. Doris Banks Henries

Leopard and Hare each fell in love with lady-Deer, and sought her hand in marriage. Hare was walking with lady-Deer in the forest when Leopard came along; and lady-Deer, who

thought Hare was a rather small and unimportant animal, said:

"Oh, I see my lover coming."

"Then what of me?" cried Hare, "Do you not love me?"

"No," said lady-Deer, "I do not. Leopard is a gallant and daring animal, you are not."

"Leopard is a horse! Would you marry a beast of burden, a slave-animal?"

"How is he a horse?"

"He is my horse. He carries me about. He is my slave."

Lady-Deer did not believe him. Hare went away and bent his head with Leopard in a secret conversation. "I have been talking with lady-Deer", he said, "and she admits she loves you, but says she could not marry such a fierce, proud animal. She fears you. I told her you had a gentle and tender heart, and that I would prove it."

"I see," said Leopard. "Then we must prove that I am not what I am. Go on."

"My plan is this: you must be my horse and carry me through the town. Lady-Deer will see us, and she will think 'Oh, what a kind and gentle animal Leopard is.' Then she will agree to marry you."

Leopard thought about this, and then decided:

"Hare, what you say is true. It is a good idea. For one day I shall be your horse."

"First you must give me a hamper of cassava," Hare said. Leopard gave him a hamper of cassavas, and then carried him round the town. Hare pretended to whip him, and pulled a rope

tied around his nose. Next day Leopard went to lady-Deer, but she said:

"O Leopard, go from me. Foolish animal! Here told me you were his horse, his slave-animal, but I refused to believe him until I saw him riding through the town upon your back, and whipping you. Shame upon you, Leopard! I shall never speak to you again."

Leopard was very vexed. He rushed away to find Here. Here ran and ran, but still Leopard followed him, and after two days he grew tired of being chased. He entered a cave he knew, and stood there with his hands pressed against the rock which formed the ceiling. He waited until Leopard entered, then cried out:

"Take care, Leopard! The ceiling is falling down. Hold up this rock a minute while I go for help, or we shall die."

Foolish Leopard pressed his paws against the ceiling with all his strength and Here ran away. Two raccoons came along and saw Leopard there.

"Brother Leopard, why are you holding up a rock which was placed by God? Leave it be and come with us."

Leopard saw that he had been tricked again, and went with the two raccoons. A week later Here and his brother, Opossum (Giant Rat), captured the two raccoons. They took off their skins and tied the two naked animals to a tree, and in disguise Here and Opossum went to Leopard's house. Here they were received as guests, and after they had feasted Leopard gave them a sleeping room. A rat had her babies in this room and she asked the guests to bring her some of Leopard's food; Here was willing to do this,

but Opossum protested against such foolishness. Lady-Rat went hungry, and that night she ate the two raccoon skins while the guests were sleeping.

In the morning Leopard knocked on the door of the guest-room. No one opened the door, but he heard sounds of excitement inside. He peered through a crack in the door, and he saw strange and unexpected sight. There was Hare dashing frantically about the room looking inside pots, tipping baskets upside down and searching everywhere for something which he could not find. And there was Opossum too, half-way down a hole which he was scrabbling in the floor. The two raccoons had disappeared. Leopard drew back from the door and held a conversation with himself.

"I put two raccoons in that room last night," he muttered. Two raccoons. And during the night they have become something else. They have turned into Hare and Opossum. A strange thing."

He remembered that he did not like Opossum very much, and that he did not like Hare at all. He growled a fearful "Wraagh!" and began attacking the door.

By the time he broke through the door Hare had already escaped, by pulling Opossum out of the hole by his tail and going first, under the wall and out into the forest. Leopard just managed to grasp Opossum's tail as Opossum was about to leave, and the tail lost half its skin as the owner struggled free. That is why Opossum has a two-coloured tail today.

When Lady-Deer heard of Hare's adventures she laughed too much, and since he was such a clever and amusing animal she

agreed to marry him. Since that time Deer, Hare and Opossum have been Leopard's enemies.

THE RISE AND FALL OF ZOLU DUMAH

E. Kandekai

Gorn is a town in the Vai-Koneh Chiefdom of Grand Cape Mount County; and in recent years, within the compass of four life-spans, a man called Zolu Dumah was Chief of the town of Gorn. The task of protecting his people concerned Chief Zolu deeply, for, although he had no serious rival and his lands were unmolested, yet hostile spears beyond his borders were as sands on a sandy shore. All tribes from the Mano River to the Junk River were included in his chiefdom, and during his reign none of his people ever rebelled against him; but he was uneasy, and finally devised a plan to make the safety of his chiefdom doubly certain.

A Mohammedan priest, or Imman, was invited to appear before the Chief, and when he came the Chief demanded of him:

"Can you make magic to preserve my power? There are enemies about me, inside my borders and without, and they may do some evil thing against me. Can you make magic to prevent this thing?"

The Imman nodded thoughtfully. "O Chief, it can be done."

"And can you make magic so that I may overpower any rival who appears?" If you can do this, then I shall give you the greatest reward that any man can ask."

The priest was pleased to hear this, but though eaten with desire to know what his reward might be he dared not ask. He nodded his head again, and announced:

"O Chief, with my skill and knowledge I can do this thing."

Chief Zolu smiled hugely when he heard this and praised himself in his own heart, saying: Indeed, I am the cleverest of chiefs, and for my cleverness my sons will rule a mighty kingdom. I will die with the blessings of my sons in my ears.

The priest went away, and being an ardent and capable exponent of his art he laboured long and earnestly and succeeded in preparing the necessary magic; he wondered greatly what his fabulous reward might be. On the appointed day he took Chief Zolu deep into the forest, and stood him in a shallow basket each as is used to winnow grain, called a fanner. Certain magic formulae which he uttered caused the fanner to rise up in the air to such a height that Chief Zolu could gaze across great distances of forest and fertile fields, from river to river and from the mountains to the sea.

"O Chief," the priest cried up to him, "know that you will rule, till the end of your days, over all the land which you see; and hostile spears will lose their power to hurt you."

On returning to the ground the Chief exulted at his fortune, praised the priest, and declared:

"O best of Immams, you have done a kind and loyal deed; for this you have my gratitude, and the devotion of my sons. But you must understand that I fear you may do some such thing for

another chief, and work me harm. Therefore I must kill you."

He grasped his lance. The Inman proudly stood his ground, returning the Chief's gaze steadily.

"O faithless Chief," he said, "has all honour left you? Or have you forgotten that you promised me the greatest reward that man can ask?"

"The greatest reward that any man can ask," the Chief replied, "is a sudden and clean death. What has gone before is lost; what comes ahead, unknown. A clean death is a painless birth into another life."

The Inman bowed his head in grief and disappointment; but he was both a brave and holy man, and craved a boon of the Chief.

"What is this boon?" the Chief demanded.

"O Chief, I wish to pray."

"Then pray."

The Inman prayed to Allah the All-Highest; he prayed that Zolu might die slowly, slowly, and that no son of his might ever be a chief. Then Chief Zolu killed him.

And in truth no son of Zolu ever became a chief, and no chief has come out of Gorn since that day.

THE LAND WHERE NO VULTURES FLY

O. Musgrove

Two vultures in the east heard of the fertile lands which are Liberia today, and decided they would come and settle here.

They flew west and west and further west, over rivers and mountains and plains, and in time they arrived at a town in this country.

They sat in a tree at the edge of the town, craning their naked necks to see what manner of people lived below, and how much food they had. The well-built houses and handsome fields suggested prosperity, and when they saw a woman throw a dead chicken from her window they thought it must be a prosperous place indeed. They knew that people in other lands could never afford to waste food in that way.

"This will be a good place for us to live," said one.
"People throw meat away like orange peel."

But as they watched a man passed by, and seeing the chicken there he picked it up and put it in his bag; and this, to the two vultures, was an evil omen.

"This would be a bad place for us to live," said the second bird. "People are too thrifty to waste scraps."

The two vultures passed on further west. Such birds infest the lands on every side, but have never settled on Liberian soil.

HOW DOG CAME TO LIVE WITH MAN

The animals of the forest agreed to hold a feast, and everyone was invited. Now, Leopard has always been the enemy of Dog, and on this occasion he bitterly objected to the idea of Dog being invited to the feast.

"Dog is an eater of dung," he said. "A wicked and unclean animal. He has no manners, none at all, and will only shame himself if he dines in company with polite people."

The other animals did not care, and Dog was invited to attend the feast. When the food was ready and all the distinguished animals had assembled, Leopard slipped out to the kitchen and told the cooks not to give Dog a bone; for he knew that Dog loved bones. When the food was served everyone was given a handsome bone packed in tender meat; everyone but Dog, who was given a bowl of soup. Dog supped hungrily at his soup, but every now and then he would pause to admire the bones the other animals had; and Leopard, knowing Dog's weakness, went to sit beside him with a large and juicy bone.

Leopard made pleasant noises as he ate, and when he found Dog watching he took the chance of publicly disgracing him. He threw his bone in the air. Dog leapt up to catch it. He stepped in various dishes of food, and when he had the bone he scrambled over Bossier and Hare to run away

and eat his bone alone. The assembled animals were surprised, but Leopard only shrugged and said:

"I told you so. Dog has no manners and has disgraced himself."

Do became a social outcast among the animals; they all avoided him, and his life grew so lonely that one day he left the forest and went to live with Man.

THE DEATH OF YARN-MAH

A. Doris Ranks Henries

A beautiful little girl called Yarn-Mah lived with her mother in a poor village; the village was on a piece of land between swamps and the thick dark forest. Yarn-Mah's mother became old, and she could no longer paddle her canoe and throw the fishing net as she did in her younger days; so she taught Yarn-Mah how to paddle and how to throw the turmah net so cleverly that no fish beneath it could escape.

At some distance from the village was a clear stream where the largest kind of fish could be seen, but people were forbidden to fish there for that part of the land was owned by a devil who devoured humans.

"My daughter," said Yarn-Mah's mother, "even before you were born many women were eaten by the devil who lives in the clear stream. The waters there are rich with fish ---

but if you take one you will die, and if your foot even enters the water there you will never be seen again."

Yam-Mah promised she would never go there. She would go fishing everywhere else, but never in the clear stream. But one day she searched everywhere for fish without success, and wandering near the clear stream she saw shoals of beautiful blue and black and silver fish there. No one was about; there was no devil to be seen, and the waters looked quiet and peaceful. She could not resist the temptation to cast her net among them, and her clover net trapped many. Barelegged and breathless with excitement she entered the stream to get more. She was almost in the middle of the stream when the water began to rise. It reached her thighs, then her waist. Quickly she left her net and tried to wade ashore, but the water rose quickly to her breast, and then to her shoulders. Looking up she saw a bat flitting about in the evening sky, and she felt very sad and lonely now that she knew she must die out here in the swamp. She began to sing to the bat:

"Bat, on your travels tonight

Visit my village,

Tell my mother

You saw me here."

The water rose to her chin, to her lips, but she sang on:

"Tell her you saw me,

And that I said farewell

Her good advice

Slipped from my foolish head."

The water covered her face and rose above her head, and thus for her disobedience beautiful little Yam-Mah died.

THE WRATH OF SANDE-NYANA

F. Kalkai

Three brothers who were hunters lived in a village near Piso Lake, and their names were Khamah, Voanii, and Zuke. Early one morning they went into the forest to hunt, taking spears and a little food, and they walked to a distant part of the forest where they had never been before. Here they found a sacred shrine, long abandoned, and lying within the shrine was a bag of gold.

"It is the shrine of Sande-Nyana," Khamah whispered fearfully, and glanced about. Sande-Nyana was the women's devil-god, dangerous and cruel.

"He is not here," said Voanii. "The shrine is old, there is no longer any village here." But Voanii was nervous too, for Sande-Nyana would kill them if he saw them standing there.

"It is gold, real gold," murmured Zuke as his eyes stared greedily at the yellow pieces. "Just let us feel it..."

Finally they took one coin, and Khamah said to Zuke, the youngest brother:

"Take this piece of gold and buy wine at the nearest village. We will wait under this cotton tree."

Zuke set off towards a village some distance away, and here he purchased a large calabash gourd of palm wine: but, planning to take possession of all the gold himself, he added poison to the wine before returning.

In his absence Khanah and Voanii talked earnestly together. They decided to kill Zuke and share the gold between themselves; so, when he returned and placed the wine-gourd on the ground, they fell on him with their spears and killed him instantly. But when they drank the poisoned wine, Khanah and Voanii also died, so that the three wicked brothers lay and rotted together under the cotton tree.

The bag of gold still lies within Sando-Iyana's cirina.

THE TALE OF THE LEOPARD'S TAIL

E. Kandaai

Leopard delights in eating monkeys, and is forever devising schemes to catch them. One day when he lay in cool place thinking, he decided to nibe friends with all the monkeys so that he could quietly eat them one by one. Leopard was growing old, and could no longer climb trees easily. Therefore he went to a large mango tree where the Monkey Chief sat with his wives and family eating fruit, and began to make his talk.

When Leopard approached the tree the monkeys climbed up to the highest branches, which were too thin to bear Leopard's weight, and from here they pelted him with rotten fruit and rude words. But Leopard raised a paw, and said:

"I come in peace, People of the Trees. In my youth I was a wild and savage animal; but now I grow old and soon will die, and before I die I wish to make friends with my enemies, and be loved instead of hated. I wish to live with you, my dear friends, and learn your jumping medicine."

His hungry gaze fell on a plump young wife, and she shivered nervously.

"Your words are sweet," the Monkey Chief agreed, "but your teeth, if old and yellow, are still sharp. This matter must be considered by our council. Call again tomorrow, and we will see."

Before Leopard came again the Monkey Chief hid his smallest son inside a strong cane basket and securely fastened it. He placed the basket beneath the mango tree, and when Leopard came he said:

"O friendly Leopard, take this basket to your house, but do not open it. This is a test to see if we can trust you. Bring the basket here tomorrow, and we will show you our jumping medicine so that you may live with us."

Leopard took the basket to his home. That night he and his wife talked of nothing but how they would feast on monkey meat, and grow fat in their old age.

The little monkey in the basket heard everything.

When morning came Leopard carried the basket back to the mango tree; the Monkey Chief took it into the tree and learned of the murderous plan his little son had overheard. The Chief thought deeply for some moments: he had suspected some such trick all along, for Leopard is wicked and has no friends, and never will have any. With two strong wives the Chief descended to a branch quite near the ground, and said:

"O Leopard, if you live with us you must eat the things we eat. Can you eat this banana?"

He tossed a banana to Leopard. Leopard sniffed and knew at once it was not Leopard-food, but he managed to swallow it down, skin and all, despite the nasty taste.

The Monkey Chief threw him a mango; Leopard bit the thing and broke a tooth on the nut inside, but he pretended nothing had happened and he swallowed both tooth and mango. Next there was a chillie, a hot red chillie which caused poor Leopard's mouth to burn, as he thought, to red-hot coals of fire. He gasped and cried, and tears rolled from his eyes.

"O Leopard," the Monkey Chief announced, almost bursting his sides with stifled laughter, "I see you can eat the things we monkey-people eat; now we will show you our gummy medicine. To jump and swing as we monkeys do you must learn to use your tail, so raise your tail and we will show you how this thing is done."

Leopard raised his tail, and the chief and his two wives firmly grasped it. In a moment they had pulled Leopard up into the air and knotted his tail about a branch: then all of them danced above him hurling rotten fruit and insults, while Leopard gnashed his teeth and swung in helpless fury.

"Swing, O Leopard, swing!" they cried. "Your crooked tale has earned a crooked tail!"

That is why Leopard's tail swings to and fro when he is angry.

THE RIDDLE OF FOUR WIVES

3. Mathias

Once upon a time three poor brothers lived at the edge of a forest in poverty and want. Their land was sour and would not yield a crop, and no animals or fruits could be found inside the forest. One day the youngest brother said:

"Let us go to the Chief and ask if he will agree to give us anything we want for five days, and in return we will give our lives to him on the sixth day.

The three brothers all agreed to do this; for at least five days of their lives they would know happiness. They went to the Chief, and he agreed to give each brother any single thing for five days, on condition that they would give him their lives on the sixth day.

The eldest brother chose wine. For five days he drank wine, and when his life was taken there was little of it left.

The second brother chose food. For five days he stuffed himself, and when his life was taken there was little of it left.

The youngest brother chose cloth. He was a handsome man, and when dressed in rich robes and raiment he was very handsome indeed, and all the young maidens fell in love with him. Now, the Chief had a lovely daughter who was too beautiful for ordinary men to look upon, and he kept her shut inside a tall fence. The young man, whose name was Talwa, bribed the guards with tunics and bales of the richest cloth, and on the fifth night he crept inside the fence. He found the daughter of the Chief in bed, and Talwa was so handsome she fell in love with him at once: and she was so desirous he made love to her without delay.

After a time they began planning their escape. They gathered riches and fine cloths and put them in a box, then crept away in the shadows of the night to the forest. They walked to a distant place, then beyond and even further, and here there was no food. Such hunger came upon them that they feared to die, until they met a maiden with a basket full of rice.

"O maiden, give us rice to eat," said Talwa, and offered her some gold. But she looked at him so tall and broad and handsome, and she said:

"I want no gold. Take my rice and eat, and let me be your wife, or I will die."

Talwa took her as his wife; and the three of them ate and travelled on. They wandered far into a swamp and lost their way, and they were nearly dead when they chanced to meet a maiden who followed a secret path.

"O Maiden, lead us from the swamp," said Talwa, and offered her fine cloth. But she gazed at him with love and longing in her eyes, and answered:

"I want no cloth. I will lead you from the swamp, but you must take me as your wife, or I will die."

She led them from the swamp; and now Talwa had three wives.

They came to a certain town and there they slept. The Chief of this town did not like strangers, and any man who came was obliged to pass a test; if he could not, he was killed. The Chief had a hundred boxes of gold, and the test was in choosing which one of the boxes the Chief had owned in his youth.

The youngest of the Chief fell in love with Talwa, and during the night he took her as his wife. She told him which of the boxes her father had owned in his youth. Next morning Talwa was hailed before the Chief and shown the hundred boxes.

"Choose the box I owned in my youth," the Chief commanded, "or your head will be cut off, and you will die."

Talwa walked among the boxes pretending to make magic signs, and at length he pointed to a box and said:

"This is the one. I am right, I am not wrong, I know it is the one. It is the box you owned when you were young."

The old Chief was astonished, for Talwa was correct. He summoned his council and said: "Our father, the Will Henry of our daughter and share my lands."

And thus it was; Talwa dwelt in that land with all of his four wives.

The first had abandoned her family for love of him.

The second had saved him from starving to death.

The third had saved him from dying in the swamps.

The fourth had saved him from having his head cut off.

What order would these wives take in Talwa's household?

HOW EAGLE, BOG, AND OTTER WOULD A MATEM

Eagle, Bog and Otter fell in love with the same maiden, and begged her mother to decide which one of them should have her. Soon after this the father of the girl disappeared while hunting in the forest; he did not return. The mother of the girl said to the three suitors:

"Go find my husband, and bring him back to me. The one of you who does this shall marry my daughter."

So Eagle, Bog and Otter set off to find the hunter's trail, and although no one knew where he might be, their dogs were followed has trail until they all came to a forest pool. The hunter's footsteps led into the pool, but did not come out again.

"He has been captured by the Water People," Otter said. "I will see what I can do." He dived into the pool, and underwater among the reeds he found the Water People, who held the hunter prisoner.

"What will you do with the hunter?" Otter asked.

"We are about to eat him," the Water People said.

"Hunters are not good to eat," Otter said rather firmly.

"Isn't there something else you would rather have?"

"Well, monkeys are quite nice, but we can never catch them.

"Why?"

"Because the hunter is a friend of mine. I would prefer you to eat something else."

The Water People talked among themselves, and then said:

"If you bring us a hundred monkeys, we will give you the hunter."

Otter knew he could never catch a hundred monkeys. He doubted if he could even catch one.

"Would a hundred fish do?" he asked hopefully.

"We're tired of eating fish. We want monkeys. A hundred."

Otter sadly climbed out of the pool and told the news to Dog and Eagle. Dog gazed up into the trees and wondered how anyone could catch a hundred bounding, bouncing monkeys. If it has been lizards, or rats, or even cats... But Eagle, a powerful bird, took flight and with the aid of his clan he set about snatching monkeys from the treetops. This caused quite a disturbance in the forest; groups of monkeys fled chattering excitedly from tree to tree while eagles soared and swooped above them, and one by one a hundred protesting

monkeys were dropped splash! splash! into the pool to the Water People. The hunter, as reasoned, and, of course, agreed that the person who had rescued him could wed his daughter.

Clever Dog had followed his trail far into the forest to the pool.

Otter had found his way to camped his person with the Water People.

They had seen all the creature of a hundred monkeys, which of these three animals rescued and hunter's daughter meet?

THE ONE OF THE SEA-GULES

S. 163.

A beautiful maiden called Nya lived in a village by the sea, well loved by all her people and desired by every young man in her folk. She also loved her people, and would willingly have married any could not decide which man she loved the most.

One day a young man came from the east, riding a tiger in a skin canoe and carrying a bag of gold. He although he was neither handsome or rich, or famous, the girl he loved and begged him to marry her. Her father, who was an official and beyond man's control there. The young man saw her beauty and took her for his wife; he dwelt in that land with her for several moons, and she was well content.

There came a day when the south wind blew and the song of the sea was loud: the stranger walked on the shore alone, listening to the voice of the wind and the song of the restless waves. He took his canoe to the water and paddled out to sea.

That evening Nya called to him, but he could not be found. Men had seen him go with his canoe. She went to the sea and called his name, but all in vain for the south wind snatched at her words and tossed them away inland: and the stranger never returned. Nya lay on the sands and sobbed, and died of a broken heart. Her spirit became a sea-gull, and when the south wind blows her lonely cry is heard as she calls to her lover who went away to sea.

CHICAGO, ILL. 1900



ORIGIN OF THE MAH AND GIO TRIBES

They sat in a round thatched house in Gbloyi town, hard by Liberia's northern border; outside twilight was knitting the shadows into night, and inside the house firelight lacquered the arms and faces of a wise old man and a youth. The old man was Bai Tee, the oldest living member of the Mah tribe (commonly called Mono) and keeper of the Banner, lean and stooped with age but a study of natural dignity and full with the richness of his years; he gazed into the fire and as memories crowded in upon him, his slow words tolled the knell of years come by. Kennah, the College student, a young and vigorous tribesman proud of his Mono ancestry, listened carefully and translated.

"We came," the old man said, "from the northeast; from a far, far place which men now call Sudan. Perhaps four hundred years ago. Five --- one really knows --- there was a town in Sudan called Sankinfanten, and this was the town from which were strong warriors, and who therefore were respected by all men of that place; their names were Nyan and Sae.

"Men loved Nyan, although he was not rich; but even though Sae was rich few men loved him well. Many strangers came to visit Nyan, and for necessary wants he would take cattle from his brother, Sae, and kill them; and Sae was vexed. Often and often Nyan took Sae's cattle, so one day

Sae told his sons to go with slaves to a certain far place, cut down the high bush there, and build a town, and this was done. Sae went to live with his wives, and his sons and their wives, and his slaves and their wives, in this new town.

"Nyan could now find no cattle to kill for the strangers who came to visit him, and he wondered what he should do. In his town of Beainfenten there was a man called San, and the family of San was also richer than Nyan's own family. Nyan travelled to the east to a certain Wise Man, bearing gifts, and asked what he should do in order that his family might become richer than the Sans. The Wise man said that he must sacrifice the leading member of the Sans, and only then would his family become richer.

"When Nyan returned to Beainfenten, San of the San family asked him what the Wise Man said, but Nyan did not wish to reveal the answer at that time. He said:

"I must make a sacrifice. The answer is in me and concerns you, but it will not come out on my tongue just now."

"Nyan gave the man, and San and his family killed and ate it. Nyan then took San into the forest to a lonely place, and the two men sat to rest in a shelter beside the path.

"O Nyan," San asked, "what is the sacrifice you must make?"

"I must kill you, O San. That is the sacrifice."

"I have lived, I am old, I must soon die: to kill me is nothing. Before you kill me, O Nyan, you must promise

He that your family will always honour and protect my family, and your sons and their sons must see to it that my descendants never live in poverty, shame, or danger."

"I agree," said Nyan. "It shall be so."

"The old man then arose, took off his robe and laid it on the ground, and he lay on it. Nyan killed him. He placed San's head in a bowl of brass and carried it to Beinfenter, and there San's family assembled and dug a grave in the centre of the town. San's head was buried, and precious stones were thrown on his grave; Nyan killed four cows and gave a feast for the San family, and ever since that day the Manu people have honoured and protected his descendants.

"While these things were happening Nyan's brother Sae had fallen sick in his town. His sons went to a diviner to ask what should be done, and the diviner said that Sae should make sacrifice with four white hole nuts. These nuts could not be found, although people searched in every place, until one of Sae's sons went into the forest to hunt. While there he saw the hole of possum (sicut nut) and dug; he found and killed the animal but also discovered four white hole nuts. He took the nuts to Sae, who made sacrifice and became well. Sae therefore said to his family:

"The four white hole nuts from the possum's hole have saved my life. The possum has been killed; let the animal be buried, and let no member of our family ever kill another possum."

"His wish is honoured to this day by his descendants.

"Thus there were at that time the families of Nyan, Sae, and San living in their towns, and when Nyan and Sae were old with grandchildren a certain thing took place:

"Sae had three grandsons called Lonia, Zana, and Sanben, and he had also one granddaughter. Lonia became a great warrior and leader, but he broke one of the secret Poro Society's laws, and people demanded that he be killed. The wise men and tribal elders all decreed that Lonia should die, but Sae was not willing that this should happen, and planned his grandson's escape. Sae concealed Lonia where the young warrior could see and hear, discover his danger, and escape.

"Lonia fled that night, with his two brothers and his sister; other members of his family also went with him, and slaves his grandfather gave him. He decided to travel south and west in search of rich new lands, and adventurous young men of the San and Nyan families went with him. It was a strong and war-like band equipped for war which marched southwest from the Sisi, and many were the battles which they fought. They overcame the Ge tribe and enslaved them, and brought them down to a river which was the Mono River of today. Here they fought and defeated some local tribes, and Lonia built a town called Napa (Na means my father, pa means town) near Mount Ninba.

"In time they crossed the river and built a town named Gurpa after Gura, who was Lonia's favourite wife.

This town is the important frontier town of Ganta today; it is the oldest town of the Msh tribe, the traditional axis of defence and attack and the core of commercial enterprise.

"The San family settled in Sanokwelle; the descendants of Nyan keep their ancestor's promise, and at any time a San man may enter a Msh house to find food and shelter. The Mano people will not permit any of San's descendants to be hungry, in danger, or in shame. The remnants of the Ge tribe, whom Lonia's people had enslaved and almost absorbed, branched off to find land of their own and became the Gio tribe. The Gio, Ge, Gwoli, Gbe, Da and Nyere are all the same tribe.

"Lonia had a son called Fynia. Fynia was the boldest warrior in the land, and although in those days great warriors were natural tribal leaders he had no wish to sit in council ---- he preferred to fight. He became general of the Mano army and built a town called Gblayi, this town in which we sit, commanding the road south southwest to the Kpelle. The Kpelle was a powerful neighbouring tribe. Wars fighting persisted for many years between the Msh and these neighbours. With the aid of Sanbeh, Lonia's brother, Fynia enslaved many of the Kpelle, and the descendants of these slaves now live on the eastern edge of Gio land at Tappita.

"Fynia's son was another warrior-leader, called Monbiasagbli. He was so fierce he would kill any stranger who entered Msh land, and many and great were his victories in war. Monbiasagbli is buried in Gblayi town, a tall tree grew out of his grave, and all important local meetings are

held under this tree, for any talk made under this tree is always sure of success.'

HOW ONE-LEG BECAME THOUSAND-LEGS

In the beginning the world had no water. There were no seas, no rivers or lakes, no pools or springs; and the animals became thirsty. They all gathered in one place to discuss what they should do, and agreed that any creature who could cause water to appear on earth would be rewarded.

Frog tried, Dog tried, Goat and Deer and Leopard tried. Every animal in the world tried to do something, but none of them succeeded in doing anything at all. Then a small, thin animal who had only one leg announced that he would try, but he wanted to know what his reward would be if he succeeded. The other animals only laughed at him, for those days nearly everyone had five legs, and only this obscure little creature walked on a single leg.

"Don't worry about rewards," they said. "Everyone has failed and you will fail too. You only have one leg; what can you do?"

"One-leg walked to and fro and round and round praying very hard; and before very long dark clouds began to gather. No one else had thought of praying to Walah, the Sky-god. Rain began to fall and kept on falling for a week, and as

one-leg walked about the land he left behind him rivers and streams, springs and lakes, and the rivers and streams emptied into a big hole which became the sea.

"How happy the animals were! The land was green, they were no longer thirsty; they played and gambolled in the water, and some animals loved it well enough to take it as their home: but no one wished to give One-leg his reward. One-leg threatened to cause all the water to dry up, so council was held and everyone decided to give him one of their legs. Those who had a fifth leg pulled it off, leaving only little bits of skin behind which became tails, and One-leg found he had so many legs and feet he scarcely knew what to do. He was not permitted to eat them, so he sat down to look at them for a long, long while and thought, and finally decided on a thing. He fixed them underneath his belly, and kept stretching and stretching himself until he had put on a thousand legs.

He still has them, and he is called Thousand-legs.

THREE ANIMALS WHO MADE KU

Miss Black

Leopard, Man and Dog one day made Ku; that is they agreed to work together to cut and plant a common farm. Leopard said:

"We will not eat rotten meat in our Ku. The meat which is fresh and has no maggots, that we will eat."

They worked in the forest cutting their farm and became hungry. Man and Dog showed Leopard the day when he should hunt and pay his Ku. Leopard went into the forest and killed a bush hog. He brought the bush hog to Man and Dog saying:

"My people, come here. Come and eat the little meat I have caught and eat it with cassava."

The three ku members made a fire and cooked the meat in a big pot. They all ate. Man and dog went back to the forest to cut farm, and Leopard continued to hunt. He killed two red deer and one black one. He brought them back and showed them to Man and Dog.

"My people," he said, "here is a thing for you." They cooked and ate the meat, and the three ku members went into the forest to cut the farm. When they were hungry again, Dog said:

"Leopard, let us show Man a day to pay his ku."

"No," said Man. "Not yet."

Man and Leopard showed Dog a day to pay his ku. Man said:

"No for me, I will get my tree when my time comes. I cannot catch meat before-hand."

Leopard said: "What you say is true."

They showed Dog two days, and Dog went to hunt. Man and Leopard went to cut farm. Dog hunted in the forest and killed a red deer, and brought it to Man and Leopard.

"My ku people", he said, "This is something to go with your boiled cassava."

Leopard knew Dog, so he went and scratched the meat on the head. "It is still fresh." They roasted and ate the deer with cassava. Man and Leopard went back to cut farm and Dog hunted again. He killed one black deer and a bush hog, and brought them back. "Here is another something to eat," he said.

Leopard saw that it was fresh meat. They cooked the meat with rice and ate, and all three went to cut farm. When hunger came again, Dog said:

"Man, you have two days to pay your ku."

"No, the days you have shown me are short. Show me four."

Dog said no, but Leopard gave Man three.

"Brother Leopard," said Dog, "you are the big member of the ku, let it be as you say."

They gave man three days. Man said: "Fine. My hand is under it. (I agree)."

Man set his trap in the forest but it was no use. The first day passed. The second day passed, and he grew worried, for he had not paid his ku. He went for a walk in the forest and began cutting palm nuts. An old lady heard him there and said:

"Who is that cutting nuts?"

"It is I."

"What are you doing there?"

"I am cutting nuts."

"Come here." Man went there. "Cut the grass around my kitchen."

"Old woman," said Man, "I am in ku with Leopard and Dog. In this ku we cannot eat rotten meat. They showed me three days to pay ku-meat, and two days have gone, so I must catch meat in my trap today. What time do I have to cut grass around your kitchen? What time do I have to set my trap?"

She said: "Cut the grass. A person doesn't ever know what can bless him."

He cut the grass and cleaned about the kitchen, but then it was too late to set his trap. The old lady came and said:

"You have done well for me, and now I will do well for you. Bring two pots from my left, and rice, and the little nest you find there."

Man did this. He cooked the food and they ate. The old woman took a horn from a small bag.

"There is black powder in this horn. As soon as you go into the forest you will see a black deer. Show him the horn and wish him dead, and he will be dead."

Man thanked her. He went into the forest, saw a black deer and showed it the horn of black powder. "I kill you", he said, and the deer fell dead. Man gave the black deer to the old woman and went away with the horn to hunt for his ku.

Back at the farm Dog was saying to Leopard:

"Let us catch Man and eat him. He cannot catch meat for his ku."

Man came. Dog nipped him, and said he would be eaten because he could catch no meat.

"I bring a bush hog," Man said. "Also two black deer, and three red deer. This can be our feast for today."

"Is what you say true?" asked Dog.

"What I say is true," said Man. "Let us eat."

They went to the meat, and Leopard scratched the heads.

"The meat is good." They cooked and ate. Man went into the forest and returned with four more deer. They ate again.

That evening Dog said:

"Let us go to a secret place where we can talk ku business, and hang heads together."

They went to a secret place.

"The things which killed the meat," Dog said. "let us show them to each other."

Dog bit the tree with his teeth. "That is what killed my meat."

"Man said: "Leopard, the thing I have is bad."

"Show it to us," said Leopard, "so that we may know."

"No."

"We will kill you if you don't."

"Then I will show it," Man showed his horn of black powder to Leopard and said "Leopard, I kill you." Leopard fell down dead and stayed there. Dog was afraid. He stood up wagging his tail and begging Man.

"Because you asked me to show you the thing that killed my meat," said Man, "and I showed it to Leopard and he fell down and died, is that why you beg me?"

"I beg you, my good friend, do not kill me!"

"I will not kill you. You eat your own thing. We will go into town."

Dog and Man went to town. Dog wags his tail when he greets people because of that day long ago.

WHY WOMAN HAS NO DEVIL

Schwab

When God brought Devil to earth he decided to give it into the keeping of Woman. "For," he said, "She can keep things better than Man."

When he reached earth he found all the people sitting together in one place. He put Devil down before all the people and said: "Wait, I will return soon," and went away.

While he was gone a small boy came running and told them there were plenty of mushrooms down the road. All the women ran down the road to find mushrooms. God returned and found only a man watching Devil. He said:

"Oh, the women hold mushroom powder hard and have already forgotten Devil. If I give them Devil they will be sure to lose him. Therefore I will give Devil to Man, and woman can find her 'devil' where the mushrooms are."

The only devil the women found was a tortoise eating a mushroom. They brought it back, ate the flesh, and began to beat the shell and dance. Man said:

"Ah, that is the women's devil!"

Now when the Devil comes to town he cries:

"Women, go inside and hold mushroom palaver!"

Women are not allowed to see Devil.

BIG BIRD IN THE KOLA TREE

J. Kundi

Big Bird lives in the forest and sits in a kola tree. He bites and he has big pepper. Spider found the tree and began climbing in it to get nuts. Big Bird put pepper in Spider's eyes and Spider fell to the ground. He lay there for a time with bad eyes; then he rose and returned to his town. He said to Black Deer:

"Let us go and pick kola nuts."

They went together to the tree. Spider told Black Deer to climb. Deer climbed up into the branches and found Big Bird sitting there. Big Bird threw pepper in his eyes and he fell to the ground and began to cry. Spider took a big stick and began to beat him. Deer could not see, the pepper burned his eyes. He begged Spider not to beat him, but Spider kept on beating him and at last he killed Deer. He cut the meat and carried it home to his family.

Next day Spider said to Red Deer: "Let us go to pick kola nuts."

Red Deer went with him. Red Deer fell from the tree with pepper in his eyes, and Spider killed him and cut the meat. In this way many animals died. One day Spider invited Tigny Antelope to pick kola nuts in the forest. Antelope is a wise animal who knows too many secrets. He went with Spider to the kola tree. He saw the tracks of many animals leading to the tree, but none led away from it. Antelope thought there must be a Thing in the tree which ate animals. When Spider asked him to climb he said:

"Spider, this kola tree belongs to you. You know where the best nuts are. You climb first."

Spider began climbing. He tried to hide from Big Bird, but Big Bird saw him there and dropped much pepper in his eyes. Spider also had pepper, and he threw his pepper in Big Bird's eyes. Spider fell down. Big Bird fell down. Antelope killed Big Bird, and when Spider could see again he said:

"Antelope, you've killed Big Bird. That makes big palaver."

They dug a hole and buried Big Bird, and Spider said again:

"Give me all your kola nuts and I will tell no one what I have seen."

Antelope gave all his nuts to Spider and they returned to town. But after a little while Spider went back to the kola tree and took Big Bird. He carried Big Bird home that night and gave the body to his wife to cook. He tied a rope about his leg and said:

"Wife, when Big Bird is cooked, pull on this rope and I will come."

He went outside to play. Antelope saw the rope and tied to hi

own leg to see what might happen. Presently he felt someone pulling on the rope, and went into Spider's house. All was darkness; he could see nothing, and no one could see him.

Spider's wife heard him there, and said:

"Spider, here is your rice and meat."

Antelope ate. When he had finished all Big Bird and the rice as well he went outside. Spider became hungry and went in to his wife.

"Where is my rice and meat?"

"Are you mad? How many birds did you give me?"

She told him he had eaten all his food. Spider refused to believe her, and began to beat her. She cried out, and people came.

"What is the matter?" asked Antelope.

"Oh, she cooked crabs and now she can't find them,"

Spider said.

"All this fuss just for a few crabs?"

"It wasn't crabs," said Spider's wife. "It was Big Bird. Spider brought me Big Bird to cook, and I cooked. Now Big Bird seems to have eaten the rice I cooked with him, and walked away."

The cooking of Big Bird caused palaver in the town. Spider was ashamed, and people beat him. He had to go away from the town and live in another place.

THE TIEIN OF CHIMPANZEE

Gbea Clan

One night during hungry season when Chimpanzee was starving, he kept walking around and round in one place in the forest saying:

"I am so hungry I cannot sleep. I am really so very hungry that I could not possibly sleep."

When the moon arose he found he was walking around a tree, and presently he climbed into the tree and went to sleep. He did not realize it was a kola tree and went to sleep. He did not realize it was a kola tree bearing many nuts. In the morning he saw that he was in a kola tree and thought to himself, saying:

"Last night I was so hungry I could not sleep, and I walked around this tree many times. I was too stupid to see that it was a kola tree. When I became tired of walking, I climbed into the tree and slept; and still I was too stupid to know it was a kola tree, abounding with fine nuts. I will never eat kola nuts again, or at least not till tomorrow."

Kola nuts are the Tien, or teleo of the Gbea Clan, and when the Gbeas saw Chimpanzee sitting in the tree without eating any nuts they thought such nuts must be his Tien also, and that he was therefore their brother-by-Tien.

That is why the Gbeas never eat Chimpanzee.

THE BOY WHO DANCED
(Liberian Cinderella Story)

M. J. J. J.

There lived a little orphan boy who had two older sisters; he was a gentle and good-natured lad, but his sisters were cruel and unkind to him. He was only given scraps of food to eat, and his sisters beat him every day and made him to do their work. They were ashamed of him because he had so many yaws and ugly sores.

The two girls excelled at dancing, and whenever there was a feast in any nearby town they were invited; the little boy would always beg to go with them but they would only beat him and give him extra work to do. On such occasions he would take off his yaws and sores, hide them in a sack, and slip away to dance disguised as a handsome youth. Before the feast was over he would hurry home, and when his sisters came they would be surprised to find their ragged brother knew of everything which had happened at the dance.

"How do you know these things?" they would ask.

"I dreamed while you were gone," he would reply. They would beat him for dreaming, and send him about his work.

One day a poor old lady came to the house; the two sisters drove her from their door, but the boy saw she was hungry, and gave her the poor food he had. On this day a great feast was being held in a neighbouring town; the little boy begged to go,

but his sisters went without fire. After they had gone he took off all his sores and yaws and put them in the spot and slipped away. The old woman had secretly been watching him and after he had gone she burned the yaws and sores and threw the ashes in the river.

At the feast the two girls saw a handsome youth who danced better than anyone else, and after a little while they went to him and begged that he would marry them.

"Be patient," he said. "Wait until the end of the feast."

He knew he would not be there at the end of the feast. He danced so well that people brought him gifts such as a sheep, and a goat, a cow, and rice, palm wine and oil and other things; and when he left he took them home. He went to the old woman, saying:

"I have brought you things which you may keep; for you are poor, and old, and thus by another night have been. But you must go away, lest my sisters steal your things and beat you."

He went to find his yaws and sores, but they were gone.

"I took your things," the woman said, "those ugly things you wore upon your skin. I burned them, and threw the ashes in the river; for now you have no need of them. Know that I am the spirit of your mother, Son, and through you will be blessed a hundred times for your kindness and pure heart, your cruel and wicked sisters shall never find their way back to this house."

Before the boy could answer her, his mother had disappeared. He found his single sheep had become a hundred sheep, his goat

a hundred goats, and his only cow had become a herd of one hundred fine fat cows. He went into the night and called his sisters, but they never found their way back to their home and no man could say where they had gone.

HOW A MAN BECAME UN-WITCHED

D. Dwanyen

In the land of the Gios there was a poor man named Keizoe. He was so poor that often his wife and children had nothing at all to eat, and although he had some knowledge of bush medicine an unknown person had witched his medicine powers, and good fortune was a stranger to the house of Keizoe.

A diviner lived in a town beyond the borders of Gio land, in what is now French Guinea, and Keizoe decided to travel there and seek the diviner's advice. He journeyed from town to town for many days, through high forests and the mountains in the north, and in the course of time he reached the town he sought. The diviner was in his house.

"Wise man," Keizoe said, "I come from a distant place in the land of the Gios. Someone there has witched me and my times are bad. My crops are poor and the prey of pigs, my children sick and grow thin; my house is old, and so am I. I wish to prosper and see my family grow fat, but everything I do is dust because someone has witched me."

"I will think on this," the wise man said. "I will read the sands tonight and dream, and tomorrow I will tell you what to do; and to lend my magic strength you must bring me seven white kola nuts, seven mats, and seven chicken eggs."

On the morrow Keizoe brought him all these things, and the Diviner said:

"If a man lives in one place and is unhappy, then he should leave and live in another place." He gave Keizoe a cotton tree seed, and a long stick with a short hooked limb at one end. "Travel towards your village," he said, "and perhaps beyond. Drag this stick behind you, and where it catches in a tree, or rock, or bush, there you must make your house and live."

"Alone in the forest with my small family?" Keizoe felt nervous when he thought of the great forest.

"This cotton tree seed will protect you," said the diviner. "Guard this seed, and keep it always with you, and fortune will be your constant guest. Build your house and live there with your family; you will prosper, and your family will grow fat."

Keizoe set forth towards his village dragging the hooked stick behind him. He walked for several days and reached his family and fared on for another week to rich and lonely lands, and in a certain place the stick hooked firmly to a tree.

"Zuon-mehn! he cried. "I have arrived! Here is rich and abundant earth which no man owns, and also a pleasant stream. Let us build our house, and this land will be ours."

The house was built; the children grew and other houses were built where they lived with their wives and husbands, and the place became a village and grew into a town. Today the place is called Zuen; it is a prosperous town and part of Boo-Quila Chiefdom.

When Keizoe died he was buried, and the seed of the cotton tree was buried with him in a pouch about his neck. A cotton tree grew from his grave, and the people of the town began to worship it for they believed that Keizoe himself was the spirit of the tree.

Even today this tree is given great respect, and no foreign tongue or dialect is spoken in its presence.

THE WITCH CALLED JEALOUS

A farmer had two wives. One of the women gave him a boy-baby and a girl-baby, but the other woman was barren.

"Since you do not bear me any children, I shall not give you cloth. I will only give cloth to the mother of my children."

The barren wife decided to bewitch the children. She made witch-medicine and threw it on the boy. The boy became sick and died, and went to the town of spirits.

The mother took her remaining child to the rice farm, and left it in the same while she worked. The barren wife made more witch-medicine and changed herself into a large bird.

She seized the little girl and flew to the cottonwood tree.

The mother screamed. The boy who had lied heard the noise and saw the bird in the cottonwood tree with his sister. He said to himself: "That is sister!"

He threw a stone at the bird and killed it. His sister was saved and his mother rejoiced.

Jealousy is a witch who poisons the hearts of men and steals away their honour.

WHY MEN NO LONGER HUNT WITH FIRE

There was a hunter so skilled at hunting with fire that no animal could escape him. He would set fire to the forest in such a way that all the animals therein would be forced to flee along a narrow trail, and there they would fall prey to the hunter's spears. One day the animals appealed to Bushdevil for protection.

"When I live in my town," Bushdevil said, "and they want to live in his town. They were safe there. Bushdevil went to the hunter with an empty rifle. He said:

"Hunter, get into my traps."

The hunter called him a fool and beat him with a stick. The next day when Hunter was sitting by his home Bushdevil appeared again and said:

"Hunter, get into my traps."

The Hunter's wife picked sticks and beat Bushdevil.

Bushdevil kept on repeating the same words, for the beating did not hurt him. The Chief of the team called all the men and throw spears at Bushdevil, but it made no difference. They seized him and flung him into a house, then burned the house. Everything burned except Bushdevil. He came out and said:

"Hunter, get into my harper."

The Hunter found he could not eat. He began to grow thin, and the men of the team held council. They told the Hunter to get into Bushdevil's harper and finish the animal. He might be killed and he might not, but if he did nothing he would soon die of thinness anyway. The hunter climbed into the harper. Bushdevil tied him up and hurried off with him. He went to his team and untied the hunter. He showed him all the animals.

"The animals have asked for my protection," he said, "and I have promised they will never be hunted again by fire. As you know I can kill you, but you cannot kill me. If you hunt animals again with fire I will kill you. If you promise you will never hunt with fire again, all the animals will return to the forest and you will be free to find them if you can."

The hunter swore he would never use fire again to hunt, and the animals went back to the forest. That is why fire is no longer used to hunt.

HOW SPIDER'S SON WAS TAKEN BY A GOBLIN

A Goblin lived in the forest and he had a son called Pei. Pei was a great hunter and killed many animals; but one day when he went to hunt he found there were no animals left. He only saw Spider's son. He killed Spider's son and carried him home. Father Goblin said:

"Clean him and hang him up to dry. Tomorrow we will eat him."

Pei hung the dead thing up to dry.

When Spider went home he could not find his son, and he wondered where he was. He said to himself: "I will go and look in Goblin's house. His son, Pei, kills much game."

When Spider reached Goblin's house he saw his son hanging up inside. He said to Pei:

"What kind of game is this?"

"Nothing special," Pei answered.

"It looks just like my son."

"Chi! I didn't know it was your son."

They began to fight. Eggs were hanging by the door in a basket, and they were Goblin's private eggs. Spider knocked them down, and in a moment he had swallowed them. Pei was silent for a little time, feeling sad about the eggs. Then he said:

"Spider, this palaver between you and I is finished. You have killed my things, and I have killed yours. Go home."

CHAPTER IX THE IRU

The eggs made Spider's stomach happy, and he went home.

THE HERALD OF THE DAWN

A. Doris Banks Henries

When Wala made the world and the animals therein, there was no great distinction between Day and Night, and often it was difficult to tell if it was light or dark, or in between, or the other way around. The animals decided to send a messenger to Wala to ask for some means of telling when the night was over and day began.

The animals worked long and hard building a ladder, a tall, tall ladder which reached right up to the sky. But when the ladder was finished there was grave doubt if anyone could climb it. Many animals tried, but they either became dizzy and fell down, or were too frightened to climb very far. In those days Rooster was an ugly and ungainly creature, not so fine a fellow as he is today; and the animals all laughed at him when he tried to climb the ladder. But Rooster ascended the ladder little by little, further and further, until he could see Wala.

Wala listened to his story, and looked kindly on him.

"You are a brave animal," he said, "to come all this way and tell me of your troubles telling night from day. Such a brave animal should also be beautiful."

Wala gave Rooster brilliant colours and a better shape, and placed a red crown on his head to be a symbol of the rising sun.

"Henceforth," he said, "night will be night and very dark, and day will be day and brighter. And you will wear your red crown, and sing a song each morning to announce the dawn."

That is how Rooster won his colours and his crown, and why he always sings a song at daybreak.

KRU KRUS

The largest group of tribes in Liberia is that of the Kru, which includes six tribes--the Kru proper, Bassa, Grebo, Loma, Doy and Belle. The Kru proper, Bassa and Grebo offer the main bulk, occupying the coastal lowlands between Monrovia and Cape Palmas.

The coastal Kru are seafarers and quite fearless. They are typical Negro stock, sturdy and good-natured, intelligent and industrious. They were never sold into slavery; they resisted European slavers with such persistent ferocity that the Europeans learned it was just not worthwhile trying to enslave them. Instead, the foreign shipmasters made treaties with the Kru, who became middlemen and raided weak or hostile tribes inland to barter slaves for European cloth, guns and rum. Kru men were distinguished by a blue line running down the centre of their foreheads, representing a ship's mast, and few European slavers would dare to seize a man who bore this mark.

Shards of pottery and iron devices found on Liberian hill-tops suggest that an aboriginal race of hillmen may have lived in this country half a thousand years ago when many of Liberia's contemporary tribes arrived. This aboriginal race appears to be extinct, and it is possible that slave raids by the Kru encouraged their disappearance.

Jacob Kru, a Kru man whose unpublished writings cover an intensive study of his tribe, reveals that legends claim the Grebos and Kru proper migrated south to the coast from a point

somewhere north of Mount Drupe. On the other hand Bai Moore, who has devoted many years to study of the coastal tribes, suggests the Kru peoples may have come from the vicinity of Timbuctoo by following the Niger River down to the Nigerian coast, and travelling west. He points out that the Krus are essentially a water-loving people and are largely dependent on rivers and the sea for their living; their fishing methods and traps are of advanced design and bear an interesting resemblance to some of those found along the Niger today.

Bai Moore points out that the Kru tongue has nothing in common with the language of any other tribe on the Guinea coast, and, since it is unlikely that the Krus are an aboriginal race, considers this proof that they must have come from some inland point. A people so devoted to water would obviously have lived near a large body of water, and various factors point to the upper regions of the Niger, possibly near Timbuctoo, as being the point of origin in question. In migration they would have been reluctant to leave the water and move by land, and the seaward-flowing Niger would have provided an obvious temptation and an admirable means of transport for a thousand miles.

However, this hypothetical river-sea movement is not mentioned in any available Kru legend, and an equally plausible theory seems to be that they moved up the river, southwest and towards the source of precious salt. By scaling Liberia's northern mountains, which are part of the Niger's source, they would have been able to reach the sea by the Cavalla, St. John, and

Cestos Rivers which run through their present territory.

The Krus were originally known as the Kedae. Prior to the establishment of the Republic of Liberia they had no chief in the strict sense of the word; they were governed by a council of elders, and the leader of the council was called the Kedakudu. When the masters of foreign ships made treaties with the tribe and hired Kedae men as seamen, such recruits were called Kedakudu's men. This name was inevitably abbreviated, and became Kudu. The Portuguese corrupted it to Kru, and doubtless this served the English and Americans very well, as Kru men or crew men would be a facile and familiar term.

THE ORACLE OF KU-JOPLEH

P. Simonds

Ku-Jopleh was the oracle of the Kru tribes, and lived in a cave on the heights of Mount Jiddah. As the oracle Ku-Jopleh was powerful and possessed supernatural wisdom. The Kru tribes along the coast worshipped him and sought his counsel in times of need; but he was particularly venerated by the Sasstown Krus.

The Sasstown Krus originally lived inland at a place called Boe-boo-jlo, and when they decided to settle on the coast it was Ku-Jopleh who chose the site for their new town. A certain family called Gbao-wympo belonged to this tribe, and only members of that family could speak with Ku-Jopleh. When the Sasstown Krus settled on the coast and built Sasstown they

continued to worship the oracle with admirable zeal, and Krus from many other tribes came with gifts to seek advice on affairs of great importance.

Tradition says that Ku-Jopleh himself had no use for the gifts men brought, since he was not human, and that the Gbae-wynpo family took possession of such gifts: but Ku-Jopleh's counsels and decisions were infallible and no one minded paying for the truth. In matters of war, farming, trade and marriage the Sasstown Krus would do nothing before consulting him; the oracle even appointed the leaders of that tribe.

The Gbae-wynpo family has long since died out, and Ku-Jopleh is no longer consulted by the Krus. Yet he is respected still, and even today there is a man in Sasstown who blows on a hollow elephant's tusk and evokes sad, hollow-sounding notes in praise of Ku-Jopleh. This horn is only blown when storms arise and lightning crackles across the sky; for thunder is thought to be his angry voice, and the melancholy notes of the horn beg him to rest in peace.

HOW SMALL AND IGUANA FOUGHT AND CAUSED THE MOON TO SHINE

A. N. Montgomery

When hungry season came and the weaker animals were dying from starvation, Leopard found a bread-nut seed and took to his family. It was so small that even Baby Leopard scorned to eat it. So great was the animals hunger that anyone who

laughed or cried would die; but the family laughed at the little seed by holding their lips apart with their jaws; and they cried hunger by damping their eyes with water and letting it trickle down their faces.

Leopardess was a wise woman; she planted the bread-nut seed in the ground, hoping that it might grow to a tree with fruit in later years. But in the darkness of the night a strange and wonderful thing took place: the seed grew to be a mighty tree laden with fruit, and ripe pods were scattered on the ground beneath it, some cooked and others raw.

The Leopard family ate until their stomachs throbbled with fullness.

But Leopard was never a charitable animal and he decided he would hire a watchman who would guard this food for the Leopard family. Such a watchman would have to be some animal who could conquer and outwit such mighty animals as elephant and crocodile, and this problem was a thin which caused Leopard much thought and worry.

Leopardess, with her cunning, advised him to choose a snail.

Now, these times were long ago, even before the Moon was married to the earth, and snail was a round, round animal instead of the half-round animal he is; when he was tucked inside his shell no one could tell if he was standing up or lying down. He was full of slime and slipperiness and part of his house was mingled; and so powerful was his slipperiness that a drop of it could cause an ox to skid about on a sandy beach. Snail became the watchman and guarded Leopard's tree.

He sprayed the tree with a certain oil so that animals and birds could not approach it; and then Leopard invited all the animals to come.

"Bring a little strength, a little courage, and your appetites," he said, "and you shall eat your fill as soon as you have overpowered Snail."

But how could the starving animals fight when laughter or tears would cause their death?

Elephant advanced to battle with Snail. He tried to squash the little beast, but slippery Snail slid from under him and the clumsy Elephant skidded and fell with a thump. No matter how he thrashed about and trumpeted he could not gain his feet again. Snail pushed him, and Elephant slid helplessly down the trail on the terrible slime of Snail.

Grocodile came, and Buffalo, and grumpy Hippopotamus; and all failed. Then Toucan came with grim determination in his beaky yellow crop he had taste of them in those days. Iguana was a reptile and accustomed to long periods of starvation: his strength had stayed with him, and his long claws were proof against the slippery slime of Snail. He was a nimble and bouncy animal who always fell on his feet, and his long straight tongue could be used as a handy weapon.

Snail and Iguana rushed upon each other; Iguana scrabbled with his claws and Snail rolled up in a ball to bang and bounce against him like a heavy sea pounding a rock shore. So rough were Iguana's scales and so tough was the shell of Snail that as they clashed in mortal combat streams of sparks

and lightning flew.

Iguana tossed Snail in the air, high up in the heavens; the moon, which in those times was far away and had never been seen before. Iguana gave his third yellow eye to the blind moon and told her to wait nearby, just in case he needed help. When he fell down to earth he fell on top of Snail with a loud 'Thump'. The hinged part of Snail's shell broke off uncovering his vitals, and Snail became a half-dead animal where before he had been completely round.

Snail was wounded, wounded, and unhinged. Iguana won the battle; but his head was fractured, he split his tongue when swallowing Snail's broken piece of shell, and he had given his third yellow eye to the moon. The moon still waits close to the earth in case Iguana should need help.

HOW SPIDER WAS HEATEN, BATEN, SWITHED AND BURNED

Spider discovered a half-town owned by a family of rich Bushdevils. Even during hungry times the Bushdevils always had food, and Spider saw that just now their house was packed with good things to eat. He decided to steal as much food as he could, but since he did not know the magic words to open and close the door he hid nearby and listened carefully when the Bushdevils went out to work some day. He heard the magic words.

When all the Bushdevils had gone to the fields Spider opened the door of the biggest house with magic words and went inside. There were too many things inside. Kinjahs of rice and bags of corn, pots of palm oil and piles of nuts, dried fish and dried meat, pain cabbage and potato greens, cassavas and yams and berries, red pepper and spices and salt. He sat down happily and ate and ate. He ate too much. When he had eaten too much he kept on eating more, for Spider is the greediest of all animals.

He was still eating when the Bushdevils returned. He hid behind a basket and no one saw him. The Bushdevil family sat down to their meal and began talking about the awful Hahnhorn Bird. Hahnhorn Bird eats bushdevils, and every sensible Bushdevil fears him more than anything else.

Spider watched the family eating, and then he began to beg for food from Baby Bushdevil. But each time Spider begs him, the little Bushdevil would say: "Leave me." Father Bushdevil grew tired of hearing this.

"What's the trouble, Baby Bushdevil?" he asked. He began to look. Spider screeched out the cry of the awful Hahnhorn Bird. The Bushdevil family were filled with fear. They all piled out of the door and bounded to the fence. Spider bounded after them and pushed them over the fence, and then returned to the house to begin eating again. He pushed his head inside a basket and stuffed and stuffed, and when he heard the Bushdevil family coming back he found he had swollen so much he could not withdraw his head from the basket.

The Bushdevils came armed with big sticks and peered cautiously into the house looking for Hornhorn Bird. They saw a basket walking around the room on legs, and hurrying into things. They watched it in silence for a little while.

"Daddy," said Baby Bushdevil, "is that Hornhorn Bird?"

Father Bushdevil said he did not think so. He observed the wandering basket more closely, and then said:

"I think it is Spider with his head in my basket. He has been stealing food, so let us kill him."

When Spider heard this he began bumping rapidly around in circles; and when big sticks began to beat him he jumped even more rapidly until he fell down on the floor. The Bushdevils flogged and flailed him and Spider howled in pain. He struggled and fought to free his head from the basket and finally, when the stick had beaten off most of his skin, he managed to get the basket off. But he left all his hair behind in the basket.

He scrambled away from the sticks, rushed outside and flew over the fence like a bird—a skinned bird. He went down to the sea and put sea-foam on his head, then asked an old lady to cut his hair.

"But Spider?" she cried, "where have you left your skin?"

"In another place," said Spider, "Out my hair."

When she tried to cut his hair, which was not there, all the sea-foam came off. Spider scolded her:

"You have destroyed my beautiful hair. You must bathe me in palm butter."

Having no skin made Spider feel very sore, and palm butter, he decided, would feel very nice. The old lady began dipping palm butter from a big pot and pouring it over him. It was soothing to Spider's skin; even more soothing, he thought, when he licked it off. It was excellent palm butter. It had a good taste. Spider decided he might as well get inside the palm butter pot, so when the old lady turned away for a moment he jumped in.

But it was the wrong pot. It was a pot full of red pepper. The red pepper seared Spider's body with a fiery heat, just as fire might scorch an ear of corn. He leaped out and rushed into the sea to cool.

A skinned Spider sauced with palm butter and seasoned with red pepper is gripper's favourite meal. Gripper fish seized Spider and ate him with great relish.

HOW JONES HONOUR SAVED HIS LIFE

A. Alma

Chief Duopu was a warrior and people considered him wise in the wily ways of men; he was leader of the Torpuh tribe. Early in his rule he chose a fertile piece of land and claimed it for his own, and passed a law that any other man who attempted to farm this land would lose his life. For many years this land was left untouched, and women would not even give a sidelong glance at the palm nuts which grew there.

In the country of the Forpuh tribe there lived a young man called Nyonenetone Yon, and he had no land; and since the Chief's land was not being used he resolved to make his own farm there, or die in the attempt. He began cutting bush, felling trees, and burning. The townsfolk were astonished at the daring of this youth, for they knew that he would surely lose his life; the news travelled quickly, and came to Chief Duopu's ears. He summoned Yon to court.

"You are making your farm on my land," he said. "You have broken my law, and therefore you must die."

"Your land was idle, O Chief," said Yon. "I have no land. Why should I starve when there is land which I can farm?"

The Chief frowned at this insolence. "You know the law of the tribe," he said. "If you had come to me and asked for land I would have found you land, for such is tribal law: but you took my land like a thief, you broke the law of your Chief, so you must die."

Three armed boys escorted Yon to the Tugbdedia, or town prison, and there his hands and feet were put in wooden stocks. After a few days the Chief came to see him.

"When twenty-one days have passed you will die," the Chief announced. "Have you anything to say?"

"O Chief, I wish to visit my family before you kill me," Yon declared. "They live far from here."

The Chief laughed.

"I am not a fool," he said. "If I let you visit your family in some far place you would not return, I know. I would lose you

forever. It is better that you stay in the Tugbgedia until you die."

"I beg you, Chief," Yon said. "I promise to come back."

The Chief refused to hear him; but then a young man came and said:

"O Chief, I am Yon's good friend. Let him visit his family, and I will take his place in the Tugbgedia until the day of his return. If he does not return within twenty-one days, you may kill me in his place."

The Chief was astonished.

"Young man," he said, "you are both brave and foolish. How do you know he will return? Does he not value his own life more than yours? Do you think he would come back, knowing he came to die?"

"He is my friend," the young man said. "His heart is good. His promise is as precious to him as his own heart's blood. I know he will return."

Yon travelled far by land and sea and came to his own village; here he stayed until it was time for his return, then he said farewell to his family and started back. His journey was delayed by a great storm which arose at sea; his canoe was dashed on the rocks and he barely managed to survive. For days and nights he waded through swamps and marched through forests, footsore and bruised and bleeding; and the fatal day drew close.

On the twentieth day Chief Duopu went to the Tugbgedia to see the prisoner.

"Twenty days have already passed," he pointed out "and Yon has not come back. Poor fool, do you still think he will come?"

"He is coming now."

"You still believe in him?"

"His heart is good. He will not break his word."

At dawn on the twenty-first day Yon arrived, almost swooning with exhaustion, and was summoned before the Chief.

"I have come, O Chief," he said.

"And in a sad condition," the Chief observed. "It is hardly worthwhile killing you."

"O Chief, a storm arose at sea, and my canoe was broken on the rocks. For seven days and seven nights I have walked through swamps and forests."

"So that you might die?"

"So that I might keep my promise."

The Chief slowly shook his head in wonder at this thing. He who was so wise in the crafty ways of men discovered that his wisdom had betrayed him.

"Then you are indeed an honourable man," he said at length, "and I have no desire to kill you, or your friend. Only promise me that in future you will obey my laws, and I will let you free--for I know that you will never break your promise."

Yon promised Chief Duopu that he would respect and keep the laws, and the Chief divided certain fertile lands he had between Yon and his friend.

THE ORIGIN OF THE GBETA PEOPLE

J. Dennis and G. Schwab

Men tell an ancient story of the first Gbeta man, who was the father of the Gbeta people.

Judu Kuhn To was a member of the Pahn tribe centuries ago, and more; and Pahn tribe settled among the Manii on the upper reaches of the Jedani or St. John River. Judu Kuhn To was a sad and lonely man, for although he was married to a gentle wife he had no children, and he felt his life was only half the life a man should have.

Youth passed from the childless couple, but they still prayed fervently to Nyiswa that he might bless them with a child: and eventually he did this thing. In her old age the woman conceived, and Judu Kuhn To took her away from the village that their secret might be kept and she could bear her child in peace: for younger women might have laughed at her. He took her to a sick-bush, and all things were made ready for the child.

When it was born a servant who had visited them spread certain reports in the village. She said that although the woman had indeed been sick with a swollen belly, it was actually a sheep who had given birth to the child, and left it at the door of Judu Kuhn To: and since the woman was beyond her fertile years, people believed the tale. The child was called Kangbi (shut door), and everyone except his parents thought he was the miracle-child of a sheep.

Kangbi grew up to be a strong and handsome young man, but when he wished to take a wife no girl would live with him; they thought his mother was a sheep. This made Kangbi sad and lonely. As he was going forth to harvest rice one day he saw a beautiful maiden passing by, carrying a small basket on her head, and he wondered who she was and what lucky man would win her; but when he returned to his house that afternoon she was sitting in his kitchen preparing his evening meal. He was not at all alarmed; it gave him melancholy pleasure to see a lovely maiden in his kitchen, where no maiden had ever been before.

"Greetings, and welcome," he said. "My name is Kangbi, and this is my house. My food is your food, and my house is your house for as long as you may wish to stay."

"I thank you for your courtesy," she said. "I come from Nyiswa. It is said that you are the son of a sheep, and for this mistruth no girl will marry you; so God has sent me to be your wife."

She said she had no name and that he should call her Nyenema (name lost). Kangbi gladly took her as his wife. He loved her well, and she loved him, and when she bore a son his life was full. The boy was named Gbe. Gbe had twelve sons, each of whom developed a 'house' which eventually became a clan. Today there are still twelve Gbeta clans, often called tribes; Gbeta means the home or 'house' of Gbe.

Kru women still make and use a certain type of basket in memory of the one Nyenema carried on her head.

HOW JI CHOSE A MATE

S. Buffer

Leopard's daughter Ji was the most beautiful of all the animals; the young male animals made love to her, and the other girls were jealous.

Leopard arranged that a great feast should be held in honour of his daughter, and at the feast Ji would choose the animal whom she wished to marry. The animals washed and dressed in fine raiment and quarrelled jealously among themselves as to which among them would win the fair Ji's hand; there was palaver everywhere and no one's head was safe. For a long time Tortoise could not make up his mind whether to go or not; he was a humble animal but was becoming rather tired of being a rubbish heap for everyone else's rude remarks. He knew he was ugly and did not mind very much. He just became tired of being told so.

But, since he secretly loved Ji, he finally decided he would go to the feast and pay her his respects, for even in affairs of the heart Tortoise was a gentleman. He bathed in a stream and scrubbed his back till it gleamed and glinted with a glass-like polish. He rubbed his paws and his head till they shone, perfumed his shell, and set off for the meeting.

Ji was dancing with Denyne the Antelope when Tortoise arrived, and when the music stopped Tortoise gave her his seat and gravely bowed to her with humble dignity. Among the bold and brash young animals who courted her, Tortoise's polished manners stood out like flowers on rocky ground.

"A shy and retiring personality," she thought, "but oh, such pretty manners!"

Antelope tried to talk with her, but she had eyes only for Tortoise's shining shell. Antelope followed the direction of her gaze, and decided to bring shame on Tortoise. He quickly made up a song, and then began singing in a loud voice for everyone to hear.

This was the song which Antelope sang:

"Ne kwla na?	"Is this Tortoise?
Nynepei wlala ti.	All the animals are present.
Tee Ji pe wlwla ti.	All the Leopards are present.
Ienynepo wlwla ti,	All the Antelopes are here,
O Ji nyene pen.	And <u>he</u> comes to look for a wife.
A hji ne.	All of you see him.
Ne kwla na,	This Tortoise here,
O sa ten kon."	He has no pride."

But even before Antelope had finished his song, Ji crossed over to Tortoise and put her arms around him. She turned to Father Leopard, saying:

"Father, this is the animal I wish to marry..if he will agree. He is an animal of dignity and noble manners, and I beg that he will let me be his wife."

So it was that Tortoise won the fair and lovely Ji, and the pride and vanity of other animals grew pale and died.

THE MOTHER WHO KNEW HER CHILD

R. Collins

Two women called Tane and Bea were travelling through the forest. Each of them had a baby son, and the two sons were alike as a pair of eggs. They came to a river. They were crossing the river in a canoe when the canoe sank. They both reached the shore, but only one of the babies was saved. The two women argued.

"He is mine!" Tane declared. "Give him to me!"

"Do I not know my own son?" cried Bea. "Such foolishness you talk!"

"Oh, for shame! You steal my child!"

They could not agree, so they went to a wise man. The wise man listened, and then said:

"It seems to me that the child belongs to both of you. Therefore it must be cut in half with a knife, and you will each receive a portion. Which half do you each want?"

"Would you kill the child?" she protested. "He belongs to me, but rather than see him killed I will give him whole to Tane."

"Ha!" said the wise man. "Here we have a thing: one can begin to see the truth. Only she who was not the mother of the child could bear to have him cut in half. Tane is not the mother. The child belongs to Bea, who would rather lose him whole and alive than possess half of him dead."

HOW TURTLE DROWNED LEOPARD IN THE SEA

J. Watson

The night sky was bright with glowing stars and a small-small sea breeze was blowing inshore; the moon was a dull and misty orange slipping down behind the edge of the ocean. Turtle looked outside and saw what a nice night it was, and decided to go for a walk along the beach and lay her eggs. She went quite a long way, waited quietly by a palm until she felt sure no one was watching, then dug a hole in the sand and began to lay her eggs.

Leopard happened to be walking along the beach too. He found Turtle's tracks, and since he had nothing better to do he followed them to see where Turtle was going. He saw Turtle laying eggs, and began to wonder what the taste of such an egg might be. He crept silently up behind her, took an egg and tasted it.

Turtle's eggs, Leopard thought, were very good to eat.

As fast as she laid eggs Leopard ate them; but at last he became too greedy. He could not wait; he reached inside her to get eggs faster. Turtle suddenly snapped her shell down hard, and Leopard's paw seemed to be trapped by jaws of bone. She dragged him down the beach, into the water, and out among the waves.

Leopard could not escape. He drowned.

THE STUPIDITY OF BUG-A-BUG

Two orphan-brothers who were poor went to a rich man and asked for money so that they could trade. The rich man lent **them** money, but instead of using it to trade they bought wine and the best food and lived happily for several days.

When there were only two pieces of money left the two orphans agreed that they would have to do something. There was no longer enough money to begin trading, so they resolved to make a farm and plant corn; with the money they gained from the crop they could pay **the rich man back**.

They made the farm, but when the crop came Bapoh, the bush hen, ate it. The two orphans took Bapoh to the rich man.

"Bapoh ate our crop, and we cannot pay you back."

Bapoh promised to pay herself, with eggs. But Elephant walked on her nest and crushed the eggs, and Bapoh took him to the rich man.

"Elephant crushed my eggs, so I cannot pay you back."

Elephant promised to pay with money he earned by working. A hunter shot Elephant in the foot so that he could no longer work; the hunter took over the debt and said he would pay with the game he killed. But hunter was lame when his foot was caught in the root of a tree, and since he could no longer hunt the debt was passed on to the tree.

"I will pay with my fruit," said Tree; but Bug-A-Bug (termite) ate the fruit and started eating the tree as well.

"I cannot pay," tree said to the rich man. "Bug-A-Bug is eating me."

"I will pay," said Bug-A-Bug. "I will surely pay the debt."

But Bug-A-Bug is a foolish and dull-witted creature, just an eater of wood, and he did not really know what he was saying. The only thing he could do was eat, and since he had to pay a debt he thought he could pay it just by eating. He ate and ate, and he is still eating.

HOW VAIN ANTELOPE WAS HUMBLLED

Antelope grew lonely living in the forest by himself, so he went to Deer to ask if he could have Deer's daughter as a wife. When he arrived at the house he was well received, and his request met with the approval of both Deer and his wife. They were quite willing to let Antelope marry their only daughter.

As was the custom, the prospective son-in-law was called on during the farming season to help clear the bush. Antelope arrived as night was falling, and Mother Deer offered him some beans. He said he only ate white rice, and that common beans were not fit food for such superior animals as himself. Good Mother Deer apologised.

"I'm sorry, Antelope, we have nothing else."

Antelope went to bed hungry; and when he rose in the morning he was much hungrier. He was in the kitchen early, watching Mother Deer preparing food. She put a pot of beans on

the fire with palm oil, pepper, salt and leaves for seasoning, and then she went to fetch water with her little iron anklets singing 'clink-clank, clink-clank.'

Antelope crossed to the fire, quietly lifted the palm-butter strainer off the pot, and sucked up beans as fast as he could, even though they were not properly cooked. In a little while heard Mother Deer's anklets singing 'clink-clank, clink-clank' as she returned. Quickly he clapped his hat on the pot and put the palm-butter strainer on his head. He was so nervous he did not notice what he had done. Mother Deer came in and he sat quietly and seriously opposite her with the palm-butter strainer on his head.

Mother Deer saw this, and was amazed.

"But my son!" she cried; "what do you have on your head?"

Suddenly Antelope realised what he had done. Such a fool he had made of himself! He ran out of the door and into the forest, and he never returned.

Those who put themselves in high places are in danger of falling down!

CHAPTER X THE BASSA

HOW THE GIFT OF WISDOM CAME TO MEN

In times gone by men on earth found life difficult to endure, for they had little knowledge and did not have the wisdom to acquire it. Therefore they sent a boy to God to ask for Wisdom. The boy humbled himself before Mighty God and said:

"O God, the hardships of mankind on earth are great, and getting greater. Pray grant me the gift of Wisdom, that I may carry it down to men, and life on earth will not be so difficult for us."

God looked upon him kindly, and said:

"Come to me when I am asleep, and I will give you Wisdom."

The boy went early next day, but God was already awake. He went again in the middle of the night, but it seemed that God had not yet gone to bed. The little boy went several more times, but always he found God awake. So the lad sat down and thought, and thought, then went back to God and said:

"How can I come to you when you are asleep? You are God, and you never sleep."

"I see that you know the use of Wisdom," he said. "Therefore I will give you some: Take palm nuts and cut them with a knife, and you will find oil inside. Build traps, thus and so, to snare fish in the rivers. Plant fields with seed, and use the crops as food in the hungry season..."

God gave much Wisdom to the boy, and thus to men; and then, wondering if he had given them too much, he added:

"Cut holes in the tops of certain palms, and drink the juice you find."

Thus men were given palm wine, which sometimes robs them of all the wisdom they possess.

WHY THE SEA IS SALTY

L. Dennis

Two brothers called Guba and Koi lived in a place near the sea. Guba was a wealthy man but had no children; Koi was a poor carpenter who carved canoes, but although he lived on the edge of hunger he was blessed with many sons, and Guba was jealous of his fortune.

When Koi was carving a canoe one day his cutlass slipped and cut his leg. The wound was deep, and he was unable to work for many days; his family grew hungry, and he begged Guba for food. Guba gave him a little food, and then a little more, but finally he said:

"I am tired of giving food to beggars. Take this bowl of rice and go to the Devil with it!"

Koi carried the rice home, and told his wife that Guba had requested him to take it to the Devil. He set off on this far journey despite the wound in his leg, and after a time he met a small old man sitting on a rock. The old man asked Koi where

he travelled to, and Koi replied that he was taking rice to the Devil.

"When you give him the rice," the old man said, "ask him for some of his dried nuts. Bring the nuts to me, and I will give you anything you like."

Koi went to the Devil with the rice, and the Devil received him kindly. He gladly gave Koi some nuts, and as he was returning Koi gave them to the old man on the rock.

"What do you want in return?" the old man asked. "Wives? Slaves? Riches? Tell me."

Koi had a wife and loved her, and had no desire for others. He wanted no slaves, for he could not feed them. Riches? He considered riches. He knew his wife had always wanted to have a grinder, so he asked for one and the old man gave it to him.

His family rejoiced when he went home. He told them of his adventures, and gave the grinder to his wife.

"O husband, you are a fool," she said gently. "There were so many better things you might have asked for. A grinder... I wish it could grind out gold, or meat, or grain."

"Perhaps it can," said Koi. "No one has asked it."

He asked the grinder to grind gold, and gold poured forth in a shower on the ground. He asked for meat, and meat came forth. Grain, and cloth, fine things they scarcely dreamed of - his wife was blessed with every comfort.

After a time he invited Guba to visit him; Guba came, and marvelled to find that his brother now lived in a fine palace

hung with cloths of gold and silver, paved with precious stones and abounding with slaves who carried gourds of wine and golden bowls filled with the choicest fruits and meats. When he discovered the secret of Koi's success he stole the magic grinder and took it to his own house. He happened to arrive there at a time when his wife was needing salt.

Guba commanded the grinder to grind salt, and salt poured forth upon the ground. He commanded the grinder to stop, but it would not, having doubtless realised that Guba was not its master. Salt piled on salt and filled the house, until in desperation Guba flung it in the sea; and there the grinder is today, grinding salt and filling the seas with brine.

WHY WASP WILL NOT LIVE ON THE GROUND

G. Musgrove

A man who lived on the edge of a forest decided to break new ground and make a farm. His family helped him to clear land and plant yans. The rains came, the crop grew; but when the time for harvesting drew near the farmer resolved to take the whole crop for himself. He was a greedy man beyond the common greed of men.

He pretended to die, and in accordance with his dying wish his family buried him in a certain manner. He was placed in a hole in the centre of the yan farm, together with a knife, a cooking pot, a gourd of palm oil and two stones for making fire. As is customary in that place his wife stayed in her house for

forty days and mourned him; no one went to the farm, and every night for forty nights the farmer came out of his grave, dug as many yams as he could eat, and cooked and ate them.

He must have been very fond of yams.

After forty days his wife came to the farm and was surprised to find that much of the crop had disappeared. She saw no tracks to mark the coming and going of any thief, and marvelled that this thing could have happened; her brother promised he would watch by night. He hid at the edge of the farm at dusk, and after several hours he saw a figure moving about the field. He suspected someone was there, and drew close--and behold his brother-in-law, who had died, digging yams. He watched him build a fire and cook the yams, and then he crept quietly up behind him and seized him by the arm.

"Who is holding me on my own farm?" cried the farmer.

"You are dead," the brother said. "And you have no right to steal food from the living, and must be punished. Or you are not dead, and therefore a liar as well as a thief, and must still be punished."

He sounded the alarm, shouting in a loud voice, and everybody came. The farmer's family came, and many neighbours, first to stare and then to scold and mock him: and he was mightily ashamed. He was so filled with shame he turned into a wasp by singing a song:

"Baba lade coyambo klubayo."

"Greediness turns a man to a wasp."

He is still a wasp, a greedy animal who builds a house of earth and stuffs it with more creatures than he can ever hope to eat. As he builds he sings his song,

"Babe lade coyanbo klubayo,"

and because of his shame he will never live on the ground.

WHY GRAND BASSA WAS CALLED GBEZOHN

Bureau of Folkways

In times gone by in Bassa land the people of the interior used to walk down to the coast bearing kinjahs, or palm-leaf hampers, filled with the various inland produce they habitually traded for salt and articles of foreign manufacture. At the appointed place of trade they would unload their kinjahs, and having sold the contents they would toss the empty hampers into a small stream which ran by the town. The thousands of discarded hampers clogged the water, causing it to become stagnant and odorous, and thus this place earned the name Gbezohn. "Gbe" in Bassa means kinjah; and Gbezohn means marshy, smelly place.

Another version offered by F. Harper holds an interesting story about spears erroneous!

There was a chief called Nondeh who lived in the hinterland, and he traded with the coastal Krus for salt. Among his subjects was a man whose name was Tetteh, and his wife was known as Ku-welee. Tetteh and Ku-welee stole a bag of salt from Chief

Nondeh, and when this was discovered they were obliged to flee.

Since they both loved salt they fled towards the coast. They travelled far, and one day Ku-welee said:

"I am weary, and with child. For many and many days we have been walking, and we are nowhere yet. The road we follow is too long; let us take another, shorter one."

They travelled on another road, and in time they came to a pleasant place where a river called Jedani met the sea. They began to build their house beneath a cottontree. During their first night there Ku-welee awoke and said:

"I smell something strange. I think it is a ghost."

Tetteh rose and looked about, and behind the cottontree he saw a ghost of a mighty snake which people in that land called Gba.

"It is a gba-zohn," he told his wife, and this place is his home."

Therefore the place was called Gba-zohn after the ghost of a snake, and grew to be the town which is Grand Bassa today.

WHY CHILDREN CRY FOR NOTHING

D. McKinley

Two men lived in a far town; one of these was called Nothing, and his friend was known as Something. Nothing was a rich and generous man whom all the children of that town loved for his kindness, but he only had a single wife who bore no children.

Something, being poor, would often go to Nothing and beg for

food, and he was always fed; but there came a time of such great hunger that not even Nothing with all his wealth could buy food. When Something went to beg from him he said:

"Forgive me, friend, for today I have no food. Come back some other time and I will help you."

Something became angry, for anger easily grows in empty bellies and he was sure that Nothing had a hoard of food inside his house. One night he called and plunged a spear through Nothing's heart, and ran away to hide. Nothing's wife found her husband lying dead with the blade of a spear in his heart, and she began to weep and wail. She had no one to help her mourn, no family at all, so she called in children from the town and they filled her house and cried and cried, for they had all loved Nothing.

They cried for Nothing and feared Something, and still do today.

THE GIRL WHO ROSE FROM HER GRAVE

C. Johnson

In a village on a hill there lived a beautiful young girl called Duakma; she was the only child of her mother, who loved her well. When the time came for Duakma to join the women's secret Sande Society she was taken to the gree-gree bush with many other maidens, far from the eyes of men, and certain ceremonies were performed. Duakma was the best dancer in the

land; when she danced the other girls watched in fascination, and even birds and animals came to watch, but there was one wicked woman who was jealous and hated Duakma because she danced better than her daughter.

This evil woman poisoned Duakma and she died. When the Sande ceremonies were over and Duakma failed to return with the other maidens the whole town mourned, and Duakma's mother wept for days and could not be consoled. One night she dreamed, and in her dream Duakma appeared to her saying:

"Beloved mother, if you wish me to live again, arise at dawn and summon the best singers of the town. Let each one sing the Sky-god's praises as they walk across my grave, and I will live again."

This thing was done. The singers walked across the grave singing the Sky-god's praises, and Duakma rose from her grave clad in garments of gold and silver cloth, with precious stones about her and a golden bowl of riches in her hands. She gave half her riches to the singers who had sung her back to life, and danced into her village while her mother and the people all rejoiced.

The wicked woman who had poisoned her became more jealous than before, for now Duakma and her mother possessed happiness and wealth. Therefore she poisoned her own daughter, hoping that fortune would also come to her, and in the time of mourning she also dreamed the dream. She called the singers at dawn and let them walk across her daughter's grave singing the Sky-god's praises, and waited greedily for her girl to rise with precious

stones and gold, and other things.

The earth of the grave began to stir, and her daughter's head appeared: but being greedy the woman ran to pull her out, and pulled her head right off. The head, which had been living, became dead and rotten in her hands: she screamed and ran into the forest, and was never seen again.

THE RULER OF THE WORLD

R. Tugbe

When Skygod created the world and the animals and men therein, a king was needed to rule mankind. The people went to Skygod and asked him to appoint a ruler, and in his wisdom Skygod, knowing the wickedness and jealousy of men, said:

"I will show you three kings, and you shall choose one of them."

He showed them Sun, Darkness and Rain, and men elected the Sun. So the Sun became king of the world, and poured his heat upon the earth until the rivers steamed dry, the rocks cracked, the grasslands burned and the forest began to die, and men cowered in caves away from the night of their king. They prayed to Skygod, saying:

"O Skygod, let the Sun not be our king, for he is too powerful and too fierce. Let Darkness be our King."

Darkness became king of the world; and with Darkness came the fears of the night, and murderers and rogues and evil beings

swarmed about the earth causing such fear and misery that again the people cried to Skygod.

"O Skygod, let the reign of Darkness end, for we are oppressed by fearful terrors and demons of the night. We beg you, let rain be our king!"

When Rain was made king the world was washed with storms and showers until the rivers rose, swamps overflowed and dry land was flooded by the swollen sea. Mankind cried out in anguish, and yet again their pleas rose to the sky.

"O Skygod, remove this curse from us, for we are almost dead. We have had three kings, and each one would destroy us; therefore we have had enough of kings. Pray let the moon, the gentle moon, be our queen."

"Moon became queen and ruler of the earth, and men rejoiced to see her drifting majestically through the sky by night--and, like any woman, always changing shape, flirting with the clouds, and each night an hour later than she was the night before.

WHY LEOPARD IS AN ENEMY OF DEER

J. Bright

In other days Leopard and Deer were the best of friends and always lived together; when sorrows came they mourned together, and when happiness came they shared their joy. People warned Leopard that Deer would one day play him false, but Leopard never listened to such talk. One fine morning Deer said:

"Let's go hunting and find a thing to eat."

"Tomorrow," said Leopard. "Today my bones are weary."

Leopard finally agreed, but said:

"We should carry food with us, for we will be out all day."

Deer, who ate far more often than Leopard, refused to give assistance in collecting food, so Leopard found six bananas and carried them with him, along with his gun. Deer carried nothing. They walked through the woods a long way without finding anything to hunt, and Deer said: "My belly is empty. Let us eat bananas."

"No," said Leopard. "Not yet. Wait until we are on our way home."

Deer was obliged to agree, for the food was Leopard's food. Some time later Leopard saw a monkey in a tree, and said to Deer:

"Deer, there is a monkey in that tree. See if you can shoot him down."

"I am too weak with hunger," Deer complained. Leopard shot the monkey. The monkey fell in a fork of the tree and stayed there dead.

"See if you can get him, Deer," asked Leopard.

"I have no strength," Deer said, and sighed unhappily. Leopard climbed the tree. He reached the monkey and was about to climb down when he saw Deer ~~noting~~ the six bananas, as if he was in the mood to eat them. He began to climb down quickly. He slipped, and his back feet became entangled in some vines, so that he found himself hanging there helplessly, upside down.

"Deer," he cried. "I beg you, climb up and cut me free!"

"I am too weak with hunger," Deer said again. Leopard

could hear people working on a nearby farm.

"Then shout for people on the farm nearby to come, or I will die."

"How can I shout when I am so hungry? I have not eaten food all day. Particularly bananas."

"Then eat two bananas, and then shout."

Deer ate two bananas, and shouted in such a small voice that a person four paces distant could scarcely have heard him. Leopard was now in great pain, and begged his friend to make a greater effort.

"Those two bananas hardly touched my throat," said Deer. "I am still too weak."

"Then eat two more, and shout for help."

Deer ate two more bananas, but his second shout was even weaker than the first.

"Have the bananas stolen your voice?" cried Leopard angrily.

"No, my friend, my voice is coming now. If I could have two more bananas my voice would be loud indeed."

"Then eat the last two, and be quick before my legs are torn loose from my body."

Deer ate the last two bananas, and then sat down and laughed and laughed at Leopard. Leopard did not know what to do. Deer looked up at him, still laughing, and said:

"If you can't get down I shall leave you, useless Leopard. Oh, how funny it is to see you hanging by two feet!"

Leopard became very angry. He struggled and struggled, and began to free himself. He said bitterly:

"When I get down I shall eat you, Deer. I will claw you to pieces, I swear."

"When you get down," Deer mocked him. But Leopard was pulling free of the vines, and when Deer saw this he grew alarmed and ran away. Leopard came down the tree and began to chase him. Deer hid behind a tree, and Leopard did not see him. Leopard went home, but Deer remained in the forest, and since that time he has been obliged to run for his life whenever Leopard finds him.

A MAIDEN WHO WEDDED A DHEVLIN

There lived a rich chief whose daughter was so beautiful that men who saw her trembled with desire; her name was Daggu. But although she was of marriageable age, Daggu was too disobedient to follow her father's good advice and marry such a man as he might choose; and she was too proud to choose a husband from those who begged her hand, for she saw no man whose beauty matched her own.

The old chief was very sad. He called in diviners and wise men and asked them to discover some solution. The diviners and wise men asked the chief to put them to sleep with gifts, so the chief gave each of them white cloth and silver. They slept, and next morning they revealed the

nature of the trouble.

"Your daughter has inherited a discontented Spirit, O Chief," they said. "We can do nothing. No one else can do anything. Her ways cannot be changed.

A powerful Dhevlin heard of this proud and beautiful Daggu, and decided he would win her. This Dhevlin had one big leg, one tooth, one large ear and one eye in the centre of his forehead. He ^{went} into the forest and began to change his form: he borrowed the beautiful eyes of Deer, Otter's silken coat, Monkey's teeth, and Pigeon's pretty pink feet.

Disguised as the most handsome of creatures he went to the chief with gifts, and as soon as Daggu saw him she fell passionately in love. The wise chief cautioned his daughter against marrying this unknown stranger, but she merely laughed. So they were married, the Dhevlin and the maiden, and stayed for a week of feasting the chief gave in their honour: and then they began the journey to the rich, fair land the Dhevlin said he owned.

They met Otter, and Dhevlin gave Otter his skin. His own was of slippery yellow scales, and cold; Daggu was alarmed. Dhevlin gave back his beautiful eyes to Deer, his fine white teeth to Monkey, his pretty pink feet to Pigeon. He became once again an ugly monster, and Daggu was forced to live with him in despair and sorrowing until she died.

Such may be the fate of any maiden who is proud and disobedient, and disregards her parents' good advice.

WHY YAMS AND CASSAVAS HIDE IN THE GROUND

Once upon a time yams and cassavas were thought to be devils. When they walked through a town people would run to their houses and hide, and the yams and cassavas would boldly march by singing and making rude noises.

During hungry season a little boy was walking along a road when he saw a column of yams and cassavas walking straight towards him. He jumped off the road and hid behind a tree; but he was so hungry he could not help thinking these devils might be good to eat.

However, there were so many of them he was afraid they would kill him if they found out he was there, so he did nothing. The column passed by singing songs, and the boy was about to go back on the road when he saw a solitary yam limping along behind. So he concealed himself, and as the unsuspecting yam was limping by he bounded out and seized it by the throat. Or where the throat would be, if yams had throats.

The yam shrieked and struggled, but the lad cut off his head and put it in a cooking pot; and when the thing was boiled he tasted it, and the taste was almost better than anything he knew. Thereafter he caught more yams and boiled them for his friends--and soon the people learned to catch yams and cassavas whenever they could find them.

So yams and cassavas were obliged to hide inside the ground, and that is the place one finds them to this day.

ORIGIN OF THE GREBO AND WLEBO

In his 'Tribes of the Liberian Hinterland' George Schwab related a Grebo legend pertaining to the origin of that tribe. The legend holds that the Grebo tribe, who used to live in the interior, came down-river in canoes to an uninhabited part of the coast and made their first settlement at Rocktown. Just before they reached the coast several of their canoes capsized, possibly at a sand bar across the river's mouth; everyone in the capsized canoes was saved, but the others laughed at them in scorn and they were obliged to leave the tribe. The word Grebo means 'quick people' (clever with canoes), and the new tribe was called Wlebo, from Wle to capsize, and Bo, people.

The Grebo built Take, later called Rocktown, on a great seaward-thrusting rock; the Wlebos, sometimes called Half-Greboes, lived in the interior behind Rocktown. The Greboes spread each way along the coast. Some went by sea to the mouth of the Cavalla River, where they built Kablake and Cavalla towns.

The men of both these tribes handle canoes with consummate skill and are past-masters in the art of snaring fish. They are a vigorous and courageous people of splendid physique, and demand high standards of honour and skill from their children.

A. Wlebo legend suggests a different history of their tribe:

Far beyond the Cavalla River there lived a man called Nepala and his wife, Titi. They left their home in search of new and better lands and travelled west, but when they reached the river it was in flood, and they could not cross. A leopard happened to come along as they were wondering what to do, and he carried them safely on his back to the other side. For this reason leopards are never killed by this tribe. Nepala had no fire and begged the Great Spirit to help him. The Great Spirit told him to take two hard stones and strike them together above a little pile of soft raffia fibre; and thus fire was given to Nepala.

Titi bore a son called Dogaya, who in turn fathered three sons whom he named Suan, Ke, and Tuobo. Suan was the father of the Palepo, or Wlebo; Ke was father to the Ketibo clan, and Tuobo's descendants were the Sasstown Krus.

This Tuobo is not to be confused with Tuobo Nyeka who lived in a cave on the side of Mount Gedeh, and was the oracle of the Putu people.

An account is given by D'Ollons of an unknown tribe who lived beyond the Cavalla River in the Ivory Coast, in a place called Nienzokoue. One day these people killed an elephant and assembled to feast on it; for elephant meat is rich fare and highly prized. While they were eating an old woman appeared and asked for meat, but no one knew who she was, and she was told to go away. Only one man, whose name was Uoro, took pity on her and gave her meat.

That night the woman came in secret to Uoro, saying:

"Man, know that I am the owner and mistress of all this land. For the harm your tribe has offered me I am going to destroy them, but for the kindness you have shown me I shall allow you and your family to be saved. Therefore go at once, and take your family with you."

Uoro left before dawn with his family. He had barely escaped when a rain of stones fell upon his town, burying it beneath a mountain of stones which today is known as Nienekoue Mountain. Uoro and his family crossed the Cavalla River and settled, founding the Gruoro Clan.

The Liberian Bureau of Folkways gives an additional account which is based on considerable research and bears the hallmarks of authenticity:

Long ago a militant warrior-tribe lived east of the Cavalla River in French Ivory Coast; they were known as the Gborpo, which means 'warlike' and they dwelt in the neighbourhood of a region called Krahn, or N'Yerya. Under pressure of more powerful tribes they were obliged to move west, and their guide was a famous man called Tranbo, meaning great hunter: it was he who first caught sight of the Atlantic Ocean, while out hunting.

While travelling west the Gborpo met another migrating group called the Kras (now known as Kru) who were making their way from the interior towards the coast in search of salt and trade. The Gborpo settled for a while in a large area of granite: the Kras passed on towards the coast, and the footprints of the tribesmen as well as the cattle they had were indelibly imprinted

in the granite.

In time the Gborpos decided to follow the Kras down to the sea. The place where they had settled was close to the great Cavalla River, which they knew as the Duo, and having decided to follow the river to the coast they set about solving the problem of transport by carving dugout canoes. In these simple craft they peddled down to the sea; they arrived at Picca-nene-Cess and some of them stayed there with the Kras, and their descendants may be found there among the Krus today. A few of the Gborpo moved eastward to the San Pedro near Rocktown, Barribo, and are known as the Etehbo.

Most of the Gborpo settled at Cape Palmas, and established themselves as a strong and well-organized tribe. The first town they built was named I'Debalu, meaning the gathering-centre generally known to tribesmen as 'Big Town'. Subsequently it came to be called Gbenelu, with a chief by the name of Gyude.

The Gborpo, having mastered the art of controlling their light canoes in sheltered water, now turned their attention to the ocean in search of fish. By persistent endeavour they won the necessary skill to combat the ocean rollers and high winds and sudden storms, and as the waves tossed their frail craft up and down the motion reminded people vividly of forest monkeys leaping from tree to tree; hence the Gborpos were compared in their agile manner of movement on the waves, with the action of monkeys in the woods, and they were given the name Glibo, meaning 'the people with much agility'. Glibo has since been corrupted to Grebo.

HOW WOMEN FOUND MEN

T. G. Sampson

When the world began men and women lived apart in two separate tribes. The women lived in a swamp and they did not know such creatures as men existed; the men dwelt in the hills, and none of them had ever seen a woman. There came a time of heavy rains when the water in the women's swamp rose so high that all the fires were killed, and thus the women could no longer cook the fish they caught. They saw smoke rising from a distant hill.

"Women must be living there," they said. "They will give us fire."

A messenger was sent. She crossed to the edge of the swamp and fared into the hills until she came to the place from which the smoke arose: and there, to her surprise, she found a handsome town with people who were human beings, and yet who did not look like women. She watched them for a long time, and marvelled at some of the things they did. At length she approached the nearest house, and there she discovered a person who was making dunboy, beating palm-butter, and doing other household tasks. She went to this person and said:

"O woman, I have come to borrow fire."

The man was astonished. "Woman? What is woman? I am a man." He studied her for some moments with growing interest, and said: "Welcome to my house. You may have fire, and also food."

But as she watched him prepare a meal she grew restless.

"You should not make your soup like that. You must make it thus and so, with certain herbs and spices...Your dunboy is all wrong. Let me show you...And do you not know that rice must be husked before you eat it?"

She gave so much advice that the man allowed her to complete his work; and although she talked unceasingly she did the work quite well. That night she stayed with him, and found such pleasure that she never did go back to her tribe.

When some days had passed the women in the swamp sent a second messenger for fire. The second woman came to the house where the first woman was living, and said to her:

"What are you doing here?"

"I have found a man."

"What is a man?"

"It is difficult to say, but he is better than fire. Pass on to the next hut, and you will find one there."

The second woman found a man and she, too, stayed. A third woman came, and a fourth; one by one all the women came out of the swamp and settled down to live with men.

THE TALE OF TOAD

T. G. Sampson

When Nyiswa made his children they all pretended to love him, but actually many were ungrateful and cared but little for him. Toad was the only one who loved the Sky-god with

a deep and constant love; and the other children treated Toad very badly. Although he was the greatest hunter among the animals and brought meat in every day, he was only given effal and abuse, and was kicked by the larger children and pinched by the small ones.

He was so good-natured that he never protested, but kept on with his work. Often he wished that he could live by himself in peace, and hunt only when he wanted to, but the rules of the tribe forbade him to do this. Nyiswa saw that some of his children did not love him, and decided to find out how many of them did. For some time he pretended he was sick, and the only visitor he had was Toad who came as often as he could with such gifts of food as he could find.

When the Sky-god pretended to die; and Toad mourned him with great sorrow, but he mourned alone. He asked the other children to help him bury Nyiswa, but everyone else was too busy playing, or dancing, or eating, so he dug a grave himself and began to bury the Sky-god with such ceremony as he could.

And Nyiswa came to life. Toad's brave little heart was filled with joy. Nyiswa summoned the animals to a meeting.

"I have learned you do not love me," he announced. Therefore you are cursed. You will wander in the forest fighting and in fear of death, and you shall not know peace. Only one among you loves me, and that is Toad. Henceforward this noble animal will always live in peace, and those animals who disturb him will be soundly cursed."

WHEN GOD MADE CRABS

A. Doris Banks Henriess

When God had finished creating the world he took one month to examine all the beautiful things he had made. He walked about the forests visiting the animals and birds and admiring the trees and flowers; he looked upon the rivers and the lakes, and finally he went down to the sea. He had seen many handsome creatures living on land, but when he looked into the rivers and the sea he saw nothing there. He resolved to make crabs and fishes, and put them in the seas and lakes and rivers.

God made the fishes first, and gave them tails and fins to swim about. He then made crabs, but by the time he had made their bodies it was almost nightfall, and he had only time to put their legs on before darkness came.

"I will give you your heads tomorrow," he said to the crabs, and went away. That night the crabs gave no one any peace. They shouted and danced and sang through towns and villages, and sang and danced and shouted along the borders of the sea.

"God will give us heads tomorrow!" they chanted. "God will give us heads tomorrow. Mighty Nyiswa! Let us all make merry on this grand occasion. Heads for crabs tomorrow!"

Everyone begged the foolish crabs to be quiet, but they would not, and no one was able to sleep. The next day God came to give the crabs their heads, but when he learned what had been happening he said:

"I made a worthless animal when I made crab, it seems. He is too stupid and selfish to let other people sleep, so I shall not bother giving heads to crabs. I will just put eyes where their necks should be."

That is why crabs have no heads.

HOW A SLAVE-CLAN WON ITS FREEDOM

This is a colourful confusion of history and legend such as Grebo men have told around their fires for many generations.

In the peace of evenings old men smoke their pipes and tell of the Bulobos and Gudobos, two clans who lived before the birth of thunder and lightning. The Bulobos were bold and strong and they had a mighty giant named Gbovanh, who was leader of their army. The Gudobos paid heavy tribute and worked as slaves in Bulobos' fields: they were not permitted to beat drums, play any music, or even laugh. They were very sad.

But among the Gudobos there was a diviner, one rich man, and three powerful warriors. The diviner said to the rich man, whose name was Gekplo:

"Let us send riches to the Wise Woman, who dwells in the Far Forest, and ask for her help and advice. It is not good that we should remain forever slaves."

Gekplo summoned the three warriors. He gave them riches, and sent them to ask the Wise Woman for help. The three warriors set off, and marched rapidly for a month through forests and swamps, crossed rivers and mountains and came to the high place where the Wise Woman lived. On the way they met a small dwarf woman who carried a heavy burden, and they carried her burden for her. The little woman was a spirit in disguise, and when the three warriors told her of their mission she gave them each a magic stone, and said:

"Each of you take one stone and hold it tightly. Do not let it go until you have done what you want to do."

The warriors accepted her advice. They went to the Wise Woman and gave her the riches they carried, saying:

"Our people sent us with gifts. Our tribe is small and has been enslaved, for our enemies are numerous and have a giant who leads their army. We beg that you will help us."

"I have only one giant left," she said, "and of course, his horn-blower. The giant is known as Doe, and his partner is called Gbia; but Doe is so dreadful, so nonstrous and so fierce, that no one wants to have him."

"We want him," said the warriors, and held their stones more tightly.

"Can you control him? He can pull up trees like rice stalks, or push a mountain on its side."

"We can control him."

The Wise Woman called on Doe, and the giant came. He was a truly terrifying giant; steam issued from his nostrils, and the hair upon his head was like a thousand raffia palms. His horn-blower, Gbia, was only slightly smaller. They scorned the three young warriors, but the warriors laid hold of them and overthrew them with the power of the magic stones they held. When the Wise Woman saw that Doe and Gbia would submit, she gave a leopard's tooth to the warriors and said:

"Drop this tooth in the village pond. Command your women to search for it, and she who finds it will give birth to twin sons. These will be Doe and Gbia. They will grow to manhood as members of your clan, and will do as you command."

The three warriors were suddenly transported back to their town, among the Gudodo. They dropped the leopard's tooth in the pond, and announced to all the young women:

"Go to the pond and search for a leopard's tooth. She who finds it will bear two sons, and they will lead us from slavery."

The young women searched all day and night, groping with their hands and feet and fishing nets, and boiling water; but all they found was fish. Then Gekplo's wife tried too, although she was old and people laughed; she found the leopard's tooth.

The following year all the young Gudobo girls gave birth to vigorous baby boys, for somehow while searching in the pond they had been seduced by the leopard's tooth. Gekplo's wife bore two sons in severe agony. The first to appear was

Gbia the horn-blower, who gazed about him in surprise and blew a mighty blast on his horn to announce that Doe was coming. When Doe arrived he wore a cutlass strapped diagonally across his body: and, like all the other babies born around that time, Doe and Gbia refused the breast and demanded nuts and meat, and grew with amazing speed.

The character of the whole clan changed, and all the men felt confident and brave. The infants grew to manhood in two years, strong and lusty men who soon began to fight and kill each other. They drank all the springs and streams dry, killed elephants for pleasure and were in general strong and fierce beyond the nature of normal men.

Doe and Gbia grew into giants, formidable fellows who could pluck trees from the ground like rotten rice stalks. One day Doe saw the tribal drums and asked what their use was. He learned his clan were slaves, and not permitted to make the noise which could be made on drums: and, becoming angry at such foolish words, he beat the drums at once.

The hostile Bulobos heard the drums. They sent a group of warriors to seize and kill the drummer, but Doe crushed their skulls between two fingers like ripe berries and flung the bodies back in the general direction from which they came.

This meant war. The Bulobos wondered what form of madness had seized the weak Gudobos; but when their spies reported that the slaves had somehow raised a formidable army, the Bulobos were alarmed. They assembled an army themselves, consisting of their own warriors and those of friendly tribes,

and they marched to war against the Gudobos with their giant Govanh, and his horn-blower, in the vanguard.

The two armies met, and the killing was a fearful thing to see. For two days the battle raged and neither side would yield; and Gbovanh, the enemy giant, was causing such havoc that the Gudobos called on Doe and Gbia. They had kept their giant and horn-blower in reserve. Doe and Gbia decided to wear iron rings on their ankles to mock the Bolobos, reminding them the Gudobos had once been slaves; so they took iron bars and twisted them round their legs. When Doe walked his anklets rang out a song:

Wloko youn, kpoyo yum!

Wloko youn, kpoyo yum!

They walked towards the battlefield; but on the way they found palm wine, drank deep draughts and fell asleep. Warriors came to wake them, but could not. They thrust red-hot irons in the horn-blower's ear, and he awoke. He took his horn and blew:

"To battle, O mighty Doe.

Kill all you can, O mighty Doe!"

The summons aroused the strongest emotions and the strongest bravery. Doe awoke and seized his sword. Together they entered the battle, hacking and cutting and slashing and thrusting, destroying the very trees so that nothing was left standing. They slew the entire army except the enemy giant and his horn-blower, and then night fell.

Great was the feasting among the Gudobos that night! On the following day Doe and Gbia went forth again.

Wloko youn, kpooyo yun!

Wloko youn, kpooyo yun!

Gbia blew his trumpet.

"To battle, O mighty Doe,

Kill all you can, O mighty Doe!"

Gbovanh and his horn-blower appeared, and the enemy horn-blower blew such a defending blast on his horn that rocks crumbled into sand. Gbia put his horn to his lips and blew till his muscles swelled and the veins stood out on his forehead. His rival trembled, his eyes bulged, and he fell down dead on the ground.

Doe and Gbovanh engaged in mortal combat. They struggled briefly, then Doe's gleaming sword pierced Gbovanh through the throat and slit him from his bobble to his brain. He tore his rival limb from limb and then ripped out the bones, and went on the massacre and ravished all the town and people of the Bolobo Clan.

Thenceforward the Gudobos lived a happy and peaceful life which did not agree at all with Doe and Gbia. The two giants served their people well and made great drums from the trunks of trees. When they were ready to marry they simply went into any house and took any number of young women until they did not want any more; whether the woman was married or not they did not ask or care, and the clan grew and grew in a fashion marvellous to behold.

But since there was no more fighting, Doe and Gbia became less and less content, until one day they decided to leave. They entered a field which was being burned; the fire surrounded them and advanced, and they were burnt. The skies darkened, black clouds appeared, a great storm arose. There was a violent volley of thunder, and lightning stabbed the earth.

It was the first thunder and lightning known to the world. Gbia was up there blowing his mighty horn, and Doe was searching the world for other giants to kill with his gleaming sword.

HOW SPIDER COOKED HIS CHILDREN AND FOUND THEM BITTER

Spider and Hare made some traps and set them in the woods to see what they could catch. Spider set his traps in the river, and Hare set his on land.

Spider was hungry before Hare was, and very early next morning he went to his traps. He had caught a few fish. Then he began wondering what Hare had caught, and went to see, and in Hare's traps he saw some things which he knew were much better to eat than fish; so he took what he found in Hare's traps, and left his own fish there instead.

Later in the morning Hare went off to see if anything good to eat had been caught in his traps during the night. He

went close to them and looked. He went even closer and looked more carefully. Finally he looked very carefully; and after a lot of thought he finally came to the conclusion that there were fishes in his traps. He sat down and looked at the fish for a long time, and then said in a small voice:

"This is curious!"

He sat there for an even longer time. He tried looking away at the trees, and the sky, and the flowers, and then suddenly looking at his traps again; but each time he did this the fish were still there. Finally he said, in a louder voice:

"This is very curious indeed; How did fish get into my trap?"

After sitting there for a very long time indeed he said quite loudly:

"Spider has been at my traps!"

Then he collected the fish and went home. He cooked the fish, pounded them to a paste, and mixed them with dumboy and palmoil and honey. When he saw Spider coming he told his children to hide, and sat down to eat his meal. Spider came in and sniffed.

"That chop smells wonderful." He tasted a little. "What is it, Hare?"

"Ho," said Hare, "I was feeling hungry, so I cooked my children."

"Well," said Spider thoughtfully, "children are very nice to eat." He ate half of Hare's meal and went home. He killed

his own children and cooked them, but the food he made was bitter, so he came back to Hare and said:

"I cooked my children too, but they aren't as sweet as yours."

Hare laughed and laughed.

"Here are my children, still alive," he said, and pointed to them. "Next time you go trapping be content with what you catch."

Spider went home and cried all night, for he had killed and cooked all his children. It is never wise to steal from another person's traps.

HOW HARE LOST HIS TAIL

During Hungry Season, Tortoise tied a long rope to a bag and set off to look for food, towing the bag behind him. He had not gone far, in fact not half as far as he had intended going, when he found some fruit and put it in his bag.

On his way home he paused to rest. Hare came up behind him and said:

"Hullo, Tortoise. This is a fine day for me, I've just found a bag of food."

Tortoise was silent for a while, and then said:

"I think you have my bag, Hare."

Hare said he did not. They went to a judge in a nearby town, and as Hare was carrying the bag the judge said it was

his.

Next day Tortoise stole Hare's tail when Hare was asleep. Hare had a long tail in those days. Tortoise met Hare later on and said:

"Hullo, Hare. I found a tail today."

Hare looked at it.

"I seem to recognize it," He looked behind him. He hopped around in circles trying to get a better look, and then came to a conclusion. "I think you have my tail, Tortoise."

"I don't think so," Tortoise said. "You didn't find it, I did."

They went to the judge, and as Tortoise was carrying the tail the judge said it was his. That is how Hare lost his tail, and whenever he goes to Tortoise to ask for it back, Tortoise withdraws inside his house and pretends he is not at home.

Whoever cheats will be likewise cheated.

HOW JACKAL SAVED HIS WIFE

T. Sampson

Jackal's young wife lay dying of a strange and deadly sickness, so he went to Weasel for advice. Weasel was a country-doctor, or medicine man, and reputed to be wise in the ways of healing herbs and magic powders. He said to Jackal:

"For medicine strong enough to kill the devil in your wife I must have a white powder from the witch people; and also a load of yams."

Jackal gave him the yams and went to the witch people for the white powder. He said to them:

"Please give me a white powder so that Weasel can make medicine to save my dying wife."

"To make the powder," the witch people said, "we will need the liver of a monkey which died when the moon was full. Also a load of corn."

Jackal gave them a load of corn and went to hunter.

"Please kill a monkey when the moon is full so that I can give its liver to the witch people and they can make a white powder to give to Weasel for him to make medicine to save the life of my dying wife."

"Well," said hunter, "it is difficult to find monkeys when the moon is full. They only gather when the plums are ripe. You must find me a plum tree with ripe fruit; and also a load of cassava."

Jackal gave hunter a load of cassava and went to a plum tree.

"Please ripen your fruit," he begged, "so that the monkeys will come when the moon is full and the hunter can kill one to get the liver to give to the witch people who will make a white powder which Weasel must have to make medicine for my dying wife."

"I can't just ripen my fruit like that," the plum tree complained. "I depend on the sun. A big gourd of palm-wine would help, too."

Jackal gave plum tree a gourd of palm-wine and went to the sun.

Be so good as to shine on plum tree to ripen the fruit so that monkeys will come at the full of the moon and the hunter can kill one to get the liver to give to the witch people so they can make a white powder which Weasel must have for medicine he will make to save my dying wife."

"I am the servant of God," said the sun. "Only he can make me shine."

Jackal prayed to Nyiswa, telling him the whole story and begging his assistance. Nyiswa made the sun shine. The plums ripened. Monkeys came at the full of the moon. The hunter shot a monkey and Jackal gave the liver to the witch people. The witch people made a white powder. From the white powder Weasel made a strong medicine, and Jackal carried the medicine home to save his dying wife.

But when he arrived home he found Nyiswa had already saved her, and she was well: which shows that Jackal might just as well have prayed to God in the first place.

HOW A FARMER LOST HIS BOWELS THROUGH INGRATITUDE

J. Roberts

Two farmers who were friends were accustomed to helping one another in their fields. They cut rice side by side, felled

CHAPTER XII THE PUTU

trees, planted crops and shared them, and were as brothers. One morning when they went into their fields to work they saw wild hogs rooting among the crops. One of the farmers ran towards the hogs to chase them away. He slipped and fell on a stake; the stake pierced his stomach and his bowels began to spill out of his skin.

His friend quickly caught them in an empty gourd, and the wounded man was able to hold his stomach in place and save his life.

"Lend me your spear," said his friend, "and I will kill those hogs who have caused us such great mischief? He killed three hogs, but he broke the spear on the fourth and the beast fled into the forest with half the spear. The farmer returned with the broken piece of spear.

"Friend, I killed three hogs but broke your spear on the fourth. Forgive me."

"You broke my good spear? And you lost the iron head?"

"The iron head is lost."

"Then you will pay for this! You will give me half your crop for this. Oh, I will make you pay for my good spear!"

"So? asked his friend. "You would make me pay so much just because I broke your spear?"

"I will make you pay even more!" cried the other.

"Then I must ask now for my gourd which is holding in your stomach, for we are friends no longer."

He took the gourd; and the wounded man, who had proved so ungrateful, lost his bowels and died.

THE ORIGIN OF THE PUTU

The Putu people are not a distinct tribe, but are part of the Krahn Tribe of the Kru Group. (Liberian Bureau of Folkways.) However, the Putu were once a more powerful and numerous people than they are today, and inclined to regard themselves as a tribe in their own right. The following is one of the various legends which describes their origin:

In centuries gone by a tribe known as the Sabo lived in the Sudan. There came a time when, inspired by hunger and a desire for new and better land, and the need for salt, this tribe began moving southwest towards the sea; their leader was a warrior called Saydi. They crossed rivers and mountains and penetrated deep into a region of thick forests, fighting hostile peoples as they advanced.

When they came to fertile land on the eastern edge of a river known today as the Cavalla, one clan of the Sabo settled there. This was the Flebo clan, which prospered and became the Flebo tribe. Another clan settled at the Southern limits of Tchien land; this was the Zela clan, which became the Zela tribe.

The Sabo were weakened by the loss of these two clans, but when they met the Drebo tribe they fought with them and pushed them south. The Sabo failed to reach the sea for the tribes between them and the coast were strong and well-established. They therefore occupied the Drebo land which they had won by conquest. A certain stream called Putu creek ran through the

middle of this land; the Sabo took this as their place-name, and became known as the People of Putu Creek, or the Putu. (An alternate theory is that 'putu' meant 'cost nothing', and the land was thus called because it had not been paid for.)

The Zela, Felbo and Putu peoples remain in a pure and loyal brotherhood, and no man among them may look upon the blood of any kinsman. Any member of these tribes may walk into his kinsman's house to sleep, to eat, to live; and if he fancies any object he may take it without question.

THE PUTU DEVIL-GOD

J. Wrotto

In the land of the Putu there is a certain devil-god who lives in a cave on the side of Mount Gedeh; the name of this fabulous being is Tuobo Nyeka. Tuobo Nyeka is an oracle and has served the Putu people well, giving wise advice on important matters and solving many problems which could not be solved by men. The position of the medium or Ba Weyon Sleo who deals directly with the devil-god is hereditary, passing from father to son; but today the modern Ba Weyon Sleo lives in a foreign land, and the oracle sleeps in the cave awaiting his return.

The surrounding of the cave were kept clean and orderly by the Putu, and fireplaces were maintained for visiting members to consult Tuobo Nyeka on matters concerning tribal and clan

welfare, ill-health, misfortune, barren wives and poor crops. The devil-god was consulted only when the moon was full; strangers gathered on the mountainside to await the coming of the full moon and--as was the custom of the Greeks at the oracle of Delphi--they often used to pass the time by holding athletic contests.

When the moon was full the Ba Weyon Sloo would enter the cave and the visitors would follow bearing gifts of ivory, salt, gold or country cloth; no visitor was permitted to sit in the presence of Tuobo Nyeka, and if he did he would be devoured by a giant snake. The Ba Weyon Sloo would intercede on behalf of each visitor, and Tuobo Nyeka would give wise and uncanny counsel on their problems.

Barren wives bore children after intercession, and these children were usually gifted and highly respected in their tribes; certain foods were forbidden then, lest Tuobo Nyeka be deprived of proper fare.

The Putu live in the most remote fastnesses of the nation, and like other proud and virile peoples they proved reluctant to bend to the will of the Liberian Government. In 1924, when they learned that Government troops were advancing on this region, the Ba Weyon Sloo approached the devil-god and asked him what would happen. Tuobo Nyeka answered that the Putu tribe would never be conquered until the Ba Weyon Sloo's little finger became pregnant and bore a son: but the Ba Weyon Sloo died on the following day, before the troops arrived, and this promise did not come true. The Putu people were

severely defeated.

The son of the last Ba Weyon Sloo is a man called Kama-in, an educated man who lives in Freetown, Sierra Leone. Some say the devil-god who lives in the cave would have nothing to do with a westernized man, but others wait and pray for Kama-in to return and take up his lawful duties in the cave on the slopes of Mount Gedeh.

THE POWER OF NYSCA'S NAME

J. Wrotto

A certain chief had a rice farm on land across a river from his town. When his crop was ripe he caused it to be cut and ~~stacked~~ in the centre of a field. Green pigeon made her nest upon the stack of rice, and laid three eggs therein.

One day the chief said to his people:

"Tomorrow my rice must be hauled to town, nothing else will be done."

Green pigeon heard of this, and flew into the sky to see Nysca.

"O God," she said, "I have made my nest on a stack of rice in a field, and in the nest I have three eggs. The chief who owns this rice has said that it must be hauled to town tomorrow, although the proper time for hauling has not come. What must I do?"

"Did the chief call on my name?" Nysoa asked.

"No, God; he did not call on your name."

"Then return to your place; for the strength of man is small, and you are safe."

During the night rains came, and they lasted for a week. The river rose in flood, and even when the rains ceased no man could pass the river for many days. Green pigeon's eggs hatched out, but before the chicks had feathers the river fell, and the chief announced again:

"Tomorrow my rice must be hauled to town; no other work will be done."

Green pigeon flew to God again.

"O Nysoa, I bring my thanks to you. My eggs have hatched, but my youngs are very young and cannot fly. The chief has said today that he will haul his rice tomorrow, and my nest is on his rice; what shall I do?"

"Did the chief call on my name?" Nysoa demanded.

"No, O God; he did not call on your name."

"Then return to your place; for the pride of men is great, but you are safe."

Rains came again that night; the river swelled and men could no longer pass over it. Green pigeon's children grew long feathers, and when they were about to fly the river fell, and the chief declared to his town:

"Tomorrow, with the help of God, my rice will be hauled to town."

Green pigeon flew to God.

"O God, my children are ready to fly, and the chief has again decided he will haul his rice tomorrow. What must I do now?"

"Did the chief call on my name?"

"Yes, Nysoa, he called on your name."

"Then leave your nest and fly away with your children; for tomorrow, with my help, the chief will haul his rice to town."

WHY HAWK KILLS CHICKENS

J. Massaquoi

A woman had a little girl whose body was covered with ugly sores. She went to all the best country doctors and diviners, but nothing would remove the sores, so one day she became discouraged and decided to throw the child away. That night she carried her to a dung pile and left her there.

Hawk had built her nest above the dung pile in a tree, and in the morning she saw the child below her weeping. She carried the little girl up to her nest, and gave her a certain medicine only known to hawks; in time the child became well, her sores dropped off and her skin was clean and beautiful.

There came a day when Hawk told the child she could go back to her town and help her mother; but she told her to be sure to return before night fell. The little girl went to her mother's home where she was welcomed; her mother wept bitterly to think that she had once abandoned her. When evening came the child stole away and went back to Hawk, whom she had learned to

love; and this went on for several days. No one in the town knew where the little girl went at night.

On the seventh day her mother and the townsfolk would not let her leave the town, although she cried and tried to go back to Hawk's tree; and when Hawk saw that the people held the child she was vexed. She swooped down upon the people of that town scratching and biting and screaming, and there was palaver and excitement everywhere.

A wise man came and with wise words he put an end to the fighting. He said:

"The child belongs to its mother, for its flesh and blood are the mother's flesh and blood. But Hawk has done good services, and for such service she must have some good reward. "O Hawk, do you agree?"

"If the reward is good, I will agree."

"Then name the things you want, and let them be the things we can give."

"Then let your chickens be my slaves," said Hawk, "and you may keep the child--until you throw her out again."

All the chickens in that town became the slaves of Hawk. They brought her food and washed her, scratched her back and gave her eggs to eat; Hawk lived in luxury for some years. In those days she wore a ring about one foot, a symbol of her rank among the birds, and one day she lent it to a chicken who was courting a cockerel. When the chicken was walking about the ring fell off, and was lost among the leaves and dirt. On the following day Hawk said:

"Chicken, give me back my ring."

Chicken could not give it. "I have lost your ring," she said. Hawk flew into a rage, for the thing was precious to her and without it she could not command the respect of other birds.

"Lost?" she cried. "Lost? Then this is a sorry day for chickens! I shall kill every chicken I can today, and the killing will not cease until my ring is found."

She killed that chicken first, and took it to her nest where she devoured it. All the other chickens began scratching among the leaves and dirt, searching and searching for the ring. The ring has not been found. Hawk has never ceased killing chickens, and chickens still scratch up leaves and dirt looking for that ring.

Hawk no longer has the respect of other birds, and that is why they dart about her singing mocking songs as she hovers in the air.

THE DISCONTENTED SPIDER

J. Wrotto

When hungry time came Spider assembled his people and said:

"Tomorrow I will go from you and seek food in foreign lands; for here there is no food, and nothing I can do will be of help to you if I stay here."

He journeyed many miles from his house, and saw smoke rising from a distant village. He walked and walked until he

came to this village, and found it was inhabited by cassavas.

"You are welcome, Spider," they declared. "We are waiting to be eaten. Will you have us boiled or fried, or roasted?"

Spider said he would eat them any way at all, but just as he sat down to dine he spied a column of smoke arising from another distant town.

"Who lives there?" he asked.

"That is where the eddoes live--oh Spider, don't leave us yet! But already Spider was hurrying off towards the eddoes's town.

"Oh, he's gone," sighed the cassavas sadly. "Why could he not stay and eat? Now we must start waiting all over again!"

Spider walked quickly to the eddoes' village, and when he arrived he was more hungry than he had ever been before. The eddoes welcomed him and began happily cooking themselves for him to eat. Spider was about to dine when he saw smoke arising from an even more distant town.

"Who lives there?" he asked.

"That is where rice lives--but stay, Spider, stay and eat us first!"

Spider hurried away without eating: he was thinking of steaming bowls of clean white rice, and weary and faint with hunger he made his way over hills and valleys to the town of rice. The rice welcomed him, and began cooking so that he might eat. Spider hungrily waited and watched; but again, as he sat down to eat, he saw smoke rising from a distant place.

"Who lives there?" he asked.

"We don't know," said rice.

"Mightn't it be the town of fresh meat?" Spider drooled as he thought of succulent roasted meats.

"We really have no idea at all," rice said. "But Spider-- wait, wait! He was weak and sick with hunger, but visions of rich meats lured him on and on, and finally when he was quite exhausted he came to the unknown village.

It was his own town!

Spider swooned away, and his family found him lying on the ground. They gave him fish-bone soup and corn husks, and he revived a little; but never again did he find the villages of food which he had seen.

THE SURPRISING STRENGTH OF HARE

E. Baker

One fine day Hare lay under a cotton tree wondering what to do. He knew it was a nice day for doing nothing, but felt it might be a better day for doing something. He thought for a long time, and at length an idea came to him and he began to chuckle.

He went off through the forest until he found Elephant feeding on young banana plants.

"Hullo, Elephant," he said. Elephant looked around.

"Oh, hullo Hare." He was always glad to see Hare. Hare was a friendly fellow and never made trouble for anyone, as

Spider so often did. Or hardly ever.

"I was thinking," said Hare, and looked thoughtful.

"Yes?"

"I was thinking that elephants can't be very strong, after all."

Elephant gazed at him in surprise. "Why, Hare?"

"Because they are afraid of mice."

"Well, elephants don't like mice to climb inside their noses, that's all." Elephant felt a little hurt. "I suppose hares are very powerful animals, are they?"

"I was thinking they might be."

A deer laughed, rumbled up from Elephant's stomach. "I'll give you a month's bananas if you can prove you are as strong as I am."

"Allright, Elephant." Hare brought a long thick rope and tied one end around Elephant's waist. "We'll have a contest," he explained. "A pulling contest. If you can pull me, you win. If you cannot, I win. Don't start pulling until you hear a call."

"Elephant agreed. Hare took his end of the rope and went down to the river, where he knew he would find Hippopotamus.

"Good morning, Hippopotamus," he said. Hippopotamus grunted rather rudely and went on stuffing himself with greens.

"I had a dream last night," Hare went on. "In the dream I pulled you out of the river with a rope, and I was wondering if I could do it when I was not dreaming."

CHAPTER XIII THE SARA

Hippopotamus stopped eating and regarded the little animal with a beady eye. "You're a young fool," he said. "I'll wade a month's supply of fish you cannot hold me one minute."

Hare tied the rope around the waist of Hippopotamus.

"Don't pull until you hear me call," he said. He went into the forest and shouted. Elephant began to walk off leisurely with his rope, and was suddenly jerked to a halt. Hippopotamus began wading out into the river, and quite unexpectedly found himself wallowing on his back. The two great beasts, each believing Hare was pulling them, began straining determinedly on the rope.

They pulled, and pulled, and Hare lay under a tree where he could watch them both. He laughed delightedly to see such fun, and could not remember having ever spent a better day. Elephant huffed and puffed, Hippopotamus grunted and snorted, the rope squeaked and whimpered as it strained. Elephant dug his toes in and wrapped his trunk around a tree; Hippopotamus braced his four great feet against the river bank and pulled till his eyes were bulging. Hare rolled on his back and laughed until he cried.

At length the two big animals paused to rest, and Hare cut the rope. The astonished Elephant gave him a month's supply of bananas, and Hippopotamus gave him a month's supply of fish; and both of these animals respect Hare to this day.

Weak people with intelligence can often win high place in their tribes.

THE ETERNAL BATTLE

O. Musgrove

In the beginning God made a tribe of men and put them in one place, and then made a tribe of women and put them in another place. The women lived by a stream and fished; the men dwelt in the forest and hunted, and when going to hunt they would often pass through the women's town and cross the stream. The women would see them return with all manner of fine meats, and they marvelled at this thing.

"How do men find such meat?" they asked each other. "Each day they hunt in the forests and find animals to eat, while we must live on fish. Let us ask them to give us meat."

But the men refused to give them meat.

"Then you may not cross our stream again," the women said. "And if you try, there will be war between us."

The men laughed at such bold words. "Then prepare for war," they said, "for we come again tomorrow."

The women had a leader they called Choko, an old lady mellow with the wisdom of many and full years. They looked to her for guidance, but when they asked how they should arm themselves she said:

"Our ripest young maidens must be our warriors, for only such as they can conquer men. And their weapons must be rich gowns, bright head cloths, ornaments of gold and silver, sweet songs and pretty laughter, and such perfumes as cause strong men to feel weak."

The men assembled for war with spears and bows, and the women went forth to meet them. All the beautiful maidens marched in front, decked in costly raiment and glittering with gold, anointed with rare perfumes and sweetly singing pretty melodies. The men gazed at them in wonder, and were filled with strange emotions: they opened their ranks and let the young girls pass among them, and soon enough each man had seized the maiden who pleased him most.

When two or three men wanted the same girl, argument broke out; men fought men and blood was spilled, but the fighting was only among the men and the women were unharmed. So it was that women married men and turned the battle; the war was carried on through other generations as men fought among themselves for possession of pretty girls.

The subtlety of women has never been defeated by the selfish strength of men.

HOW A WICKED WOMAN BURNED

Men tell a tale of two rich chiefs, River Chief and Hill Chief. River Chief lived by a river and had a handsome son who was a clever fisherman, and an ugly daughter whose name was Ti. Hill Chief had no children. River Chief sent Ti to him as a wife, and Hill Chief took her; she was a good and gentle woman and Hill Chief did not mind her ugliness.

After a time new life began to grow inside Ti, and Hill Chief prayed the child might be a boy. But his headwife, who was

a wicked woman and had borne no children, became jealous of young Ti and resolved to kill the baby as soon as it was born. She took ugly Ti to midwives and she gave birth to a son. The headwife put the baby in a box and threw it in the river, and took a kitten to Hill Chief.

"Chief, see what the ugly girl called Ti bore you."

Hill Chief gazed in surprise and shame at the kitten.

"I have never heard of such a thing before," he said. "It is against nature." He grieved that the blessing of a son was denied him. Being filled with shame he forbade any mention of this thing inside his house: and the headwife abused and mis-used Ti like a common slave, causing her much unhappiness.

The box with the baby floated down the river and was snared in a fishing net cast by the son of River Chief. He took the box to his father; they opened it, found the baby boy, and cared for it.

Again new life grew in Ti, and she bore a second child, also a son. The headwife bound a cloth about Ti's eyes, as she had done before, and Ti could not see. The headwife put this second baby in a box and threw it in the river; and she said to Ti:

"You have borne a baby dog. How is this?"

Ti wept and shook her head in grief.

"No," she cried, "It was a child, my child. What have you done with it?"

But the headwife took a puppy to Hill Chief, saying:

"Your ugly Ti has borne the child of a dog, as ugly as herself."

Hill Chief was amazed: first a kitten, and then a puppy. A most curious affair. For since he ordered that no one in his house should speak of this,

The second baby was also discovered in the river by the son of the River Chief, and saved; and the two baby boys grew up to handsome youths. River Chief began to suspect the two children belonged to Hill Chief, and one day he called his daughter to his side and asked:

"Ti, how is it that you have borne no children for your husband?"

"I did! I have borne two children. But each time I bore a child the headwife bound a cloth about my head so that I should not see, and took my babies from me. I saw neither of them, and what she did with them I do not know. On the first occasion she gave a kitten to my husband, saying I had borne a kitten; on the second occasion she gave a puppy to my husband, saying I had borne a puppy! But no one would believe it was not true. Each time I heard my baby cry: it was not the cry of any animal!"

River Chief realized that the two young men he and his son had raised belonged to Ti and Hill Chief; and on the following day he said to the two boys:

"Today I send you to your father, your real father, who is Hill Chief and an honourable man. Go, but do not tell him who you are, and return."

He also warned them not to reveal their secret to their mother until the time was ripe. The two youths went to Hill Chief and when he saw his own two sons, not knowing them he

wept with sorrow that he had no sons of his own. He accepted them into his house and honoured them, and sent them to the headwife's house to eat the best of food. The two lads saw the headwife scolding and beating their gentle mother, and watched her drive her from the house saying such an ugly creature was not fit company for two handsome young men.

The two boys' bowels burned with anger, but they said nothing. On the next day they went back to their 'father' by the river. At the proper time River Chief returned with them to Hill Chief, and there he asked Hill Chief to assemble all the people of the town to hear important words. To the gathering he said:

"You see before you two young men, both noble men of royal birth; it is thought they are my sons, but now their story can be told. Some years ago I gave my daughter Ti to Hill Chief as his wife. Ti bore two sons, but Hill Chief's headwife, being evil, threw them in the river; my own son found and saved them, and they have lived in my family until now. I now give them back to Hill Chief with my blessing."

The two youths went to their father and embraced him, and Hill Chief wept tears of joy, for his greatest wish had been suddenly fulfilled. He called Ti to his side, and honored her. All the town rejoiced, and shouted for the headwife's blood. The headwife cowered in a corner, sick with fear. Men brought her before the Chief, and she grovelled in the dirt and begged for mercy.

"Mercy?" he cried. "Men, tied her to a post in the market place, Put sticks about her feet and lit them, so that she would slowly burn."

Thus the wicked headwife burned alive, Ti gained honour and the love of her husband and two sons, and the two great Chiefs united in rejoicing with their sons and wives.

HOW ANTELOPE REVENGED HIS WIFE

J. Sackey and G. Schwab

Nemo, the Pigmy Antelope, left his house and went on a long journey; his wife stayed in town. One night Chimpanzee came to the house and knocked on the door.

"Who knocks?" asked lady-Antelope.

"Your husband," said Chimpanzee. "Open the door."

"My husband's voice is not so big," said lady-Antelope. She would not open the door. Chimpanzee went to a diviner and asked for medicine to make his voice small like Nemo's. The diviner heated a piece of iron in the fire until it was red, and then stuffed it down Chimpanzee's throat.

Chimpanzee sat down and said nothing for a long time. He was quite certain that pieces of red-hot iron were not fit food for Chimpanzees, but the diviner gave him sweet juices to drink and he felt better. That night he went again to the door of Nemo's house and said:

"Open the door, dear wife." His voice was now small-small like Nemo's, and lady-Antelope opened the door. Chimpanzee

sprang on her and killed her. He ripped her stomach out and threw it in a drinking pot, and carried the rest of the body away to eat.

Antelope returned from his journey. He went to his house, found the door open and his wife gone, and saw something in the drinking pot. He said to himself: "Someone has killed my wife. I will go to the diviner and find out who it was."

The diviner said to him:

"A herd will pass by. The last in the ..."

"What kind of a herd?"

"Don't interrupt divining. As I was saying, a herd will pass by: The last in the herd will be singing in a small-small voice, and he will be the one who killed your wife."

Nemo thanked him, and went to hide behind a bush with a spear. A herd of chimpanzees strolled by, and the last one was singing in a small-small voice:

"I took the life of someone's wife,
And carved her with hunting knife..."

Nemo threw the spear and killed him. The other chimpanzees hurried back and drove Nemo away, then went and lay beneath a tree to sleep. Nemo cut kola nuts, and put half a nut in each side of the chimpanzees' bottoms so that everyone would see this, and know that they were villains.

THE KITCHEN IN THE SKY

J. Cooper

During hungry season all the animals except Chameleon became quite thin. Baboon was surprised to see that instead of becoming thin Chameleon grew quite fat, and one day he asked him how this could be.

"Every animal has a secret," said Chameleon, "and that is mine."

Baboon begged Chameleon to tell him. "I promise I will tell no other animal," he said. "I beg you, my good friend, explain how you grow fat while everyone grows thin."

"Then you must hold to your promise. And especially you must never let Spider know."

"I promise on my heart's blood," Baboon declared, and Chameleon let him know what the secret was.

"The Spirit of my mother lives in the sky," he said. "Every day she lowers a rope so that I can climb up and eat some of the fine food she has."

"That is a fine idea," said Baboon. "I would like to climb up too."

The following day he went with Chameleon to a secret place, climbed the rope ate his fill, and returned to earth with his friend. Baboon was excited about his trip to the sky; he forgot about his promise and began telling all the other animals about Chameleon's rope. Spider heard, Deer heard, Possum and Snake and Groundhog heard, and they decided they would also climb the rope.

Next day they all went together to the secret place and arrived before Chameleon. When the rope came down they began to climb, and as more and more animals swarmed up towards the sky Mother Chameleon wondered why the rope was becoming so heavy. She had to hold the rope, and although she was very strong her tail began to curl in knots with the effort of holding on.

When most of the animals were halfway up Elephant came along. He had not heard about the rope, but he thought that everyone had found an easy way to heaven, so he seized the rope and also began to climb. This was too much for poor Mother Chameleon; she almost swooned with the effort of bearing Elephant's weight as well, and the rope slipped from her hands.

All the animals fell down. Baboon fell on top of Elephant, and everyone else fell on Baboon; he landed so hard on Elephant's upturned feet that his bottom has been pink and tender ever since. Chameleon saw what had happened and knew that Baboon had betrayed him. He went away to hide in the forest; he learned to change his colour whenever anyone approached, and thereafter he was invisible. He would creep slowly every day to another secret place where his mother would lower the rope, and no one has ever found out where it is.

THE PRODIGAL HUNTER

A young man grew up to be a mighty hunter. He became so famous he left his family and entered the service of a wealthy Chief. The Chief paid him well, so that he became rich and proud; he neglected his old father and mother, who lived in poverty and almost starved to death.

But the Chief himself was an arrogant man, and the hunter wondered if his master really loved him; he decided to find out. He went into the forest and slew a fine red deer, then sprinkled himself with blood and went back to the Chief.

"O Chief," he said, "I beg forgiveness, for while hunting I shot at a deer and killed a man instead. Protect me from his family, O Chief."

The Chief was annoyed.

"Go," he said. "Go from this town and never return. I want no palaver with dead men and relatives here."

The hunter sadly went away. He thought he would visit his family, so he went to them and said:

"I have killed a man while hunting. Will you help me?"

They received him with great rejoicing, and tears came to his eyes when he saw how much they loved him.

"My son," his father said, "you have returned, and now our hearts are alive whereas before they were dead."

Then the hunter laughed with happiness, and brought in the fine red deer.

"It was a deer I killed, and not a man. All these years I have been killing my own self, but now your love has made me live again!"

He lived among his family in happiness until he died.

CHAPTER XIV THE SIKON

WHY BATS ARE NEVER BURIED

G. Dennis

There was a time when Bat had no wings, and he was considered one of the most beautiful of all animals. He was a small creature who walked on the ground and climbed trees, and for many years he was content to live like this; but when he experienced the misfortunes of life common to all people he became dissatisfied. When hungry season came and he could not find enough to eat he began feeling sorry for himself.

"I wish I had wings," he thought. "It must be nice to be a bird." But then he reflected that birds also had their misfortunes, and decided he would like to be both bird and animal. He went to God and asked for wings, and God gave them to him.

From that time Bat flew in the air like a bird; when hungry season came to animals he would live with the birds, and when hungry season came to the birds he would live with the animals. Bat was quite content with this existence, but finally he died, as people will. When his death was known, the birds came to claim his body and bury it in the proper place with honour; for, knowing Bat had wings they presumed he was a bird. But then they saw he had the body of an animal, and teeth like Rat, and fur instead of feathers; so they decided he was not a bird and refused to bury him.

The animals came to take Bat's body and bury it with reverence, thinking he was an animal; but when they saw that he had wings they thought he was a bird, since only birds have wings--and they, too, refused to bury him.

So Bat's body lay neglected in the forest until it slowly disappeared; Bat was never buried, and none of his descendants were ever given graves. Which is what may happen to one who is discontented with the life that God has given him.

THE THING CALLED GRATITUDE

L. McKay

A certain town was infested with serpents of every size and colour, and they lived by eating the people in that town, and the children. The serpents dwelt in holes in the ground and also in the thatched roofs of the houses; during the day they crawled from their holes and hunted children, and by night they dropped from ceilings onto sleeping men and women. In this fashion many people were devoured, and the townsfolk lived in terror of their lives.

In those days the hearts of men were soft, and few cared to hurt a living thing; only women and animals had learned cruelty. But there came a time when the people grew weary of the serpents, and they called in a powerful medicine man to rid the town of them. The medicine man was Tagboh Walakpu, a famous man, and he brought with him several followers skilled

in killing spirits, devils, djinn and common monsters. He entered the town from the east, and his followers played such sweet music on stringed instruments that serpents issued forth from holes and housetops to sway and dance about the streets. Walakpu walked among them blowing his medicine horn, and whenever he did this every serpent near him died.

Only one escaped. This was an elderly serpent filled with the cunning of its years, and called Wulu. He fled from Walakpu, and finding a woman cooking soap he said to her:

"A medicine man has come and is killing all my kin: hide me, and I will do you good."

The woman was afraid of him.

"Be not afraid. Hide me in a secret place, and I will make you rich and bring you bowls of happiness. I will not harm you."

At length the woman agreed to hide him, and bade Wulu crawl into her box, or behind a pot, or under a fishing net; but this he refused to do.

"Walakpu would find me in such places. You must put me in your stomach."

He persuaded the woman to open her mouth and he crawled into her stomach. Walakpu passed by blowing his medicine horn, but woman asked Wulu to come forth from her stomach, for she had work to do.

"If you do not stop talking," Wulu said, "I shall eat your tongue."

"What is this? You promised to give me happiness if I save you."

"Words are dead when they are spoken. Be quiet!"

A nearby Crow happened to overhear this conversation, and he asked the woman to explain what he had heard. When she began to talk the serpent said:

"If you tell anything to Crow I'll sink my fangs into your heart. Be quiet, woman!"

"Ah," said Crow, "I heard that." He then asked Wulu: "Since this woman has helped you when you needed help, should you not be grateful?"

"Gratitude is weakness," said the serpent.

"Gratitude is wisdom," Crow declared, "and has three eyes, like me."

"You have three eyes?"

"Of course I have three eyes, as you can see."

"I have never seen a three-eyed bird." Wulu crawled up the woman's throat and put his head outside her mouth that he might look at Crow. Crow seized him in his beak and pulled him forth. He carried Wulu high in the air, then dropped him on the ground and broke his back. The woman was overjoyed, and brought rice for Crow to eat: but even as he ate she laid hands on him, saying:

"I must make sacrifice on my children's graves. I will put your blood on their graves."

Crow protested loudly, and an old man came. This old man had a black hen which he loved. He asked the woman:

"Since Crow helped you when you needed help, should you not be grateful?"

"Gratitude is foolishness," the woman said.

"Gratitude is God's best gift to men, but it seems that women have none. I will give you my black hen if you will let Crow go."

The woman agreed to this. As Crow flew off he snatched one eye from the poor old man and crushed it in his beak and swallowed it.

"Gratitude is an egg without a shell," he cried, "or an eye without a head—soft, and easily wounded. The first armour anyone must have is a shell about his heart, or he will suffer."

From a serpent, a woman and a crow men learned to harden their soft hearts.

HOW DEER MADE A FARMER RICH

J. Cummings

A man went into the forest to make a farm. He chose a fine piece of land, sacrificed a hen, then cut down the bushes and trees and burned them and made his farm. He planted cassava and waited for his crop to grow.

The farmer came to know that a deer walked through his farm every night, disturbing the cassava plants and leaving her footprints in the soil for everyone to see. One night he waited at his farm, and saw the deer approaching.

"O deer!" he cried. "Every night you walk across my farm, treading on my plants and spoiling them. This thing must cease,

or there will be palaver."

"It is my land," deer said, "not yours. Long before you came I used to walk through here. You have built your farm across my road. Remove your farm to another place, and I will cease to trouble you."

The farmer knew he could not move his farm.

"I'll move my farm from here if you'll remove your footmarks from the soil."

Deer went around trying to wipe out his footmarks, but he only made more and more. He tried going around backwards and covering his footprints as he went, but only became confused and dizzy. Finally he came back to the farmer and said:

"If I make you rich, will you give your farm and crop to me?" Deer liked cassava very well.

The farmer agreed. "If you make me rich you may do as you wish with my farm."

"Then come with me." They went together to a distant place, and deer told the farmer to pass that night asleep on a certain flat rock. The farmer was afraid of the spirits and forest devils who wander abroad at night, but deer said it was a magic rock and no harm would come to him.

Deer went away, and the man settled down to sleep on the flat rock. Deer went to a nearby town and stole a hamper of kola nuts belonging to the chief. He kept dropping nuts as he walked back to the farmer, and then stood the hamper against the rock and went away.

In the morning the chief discovered his kola nuts were stolen and set his warriors to catch the thief. They followed the trail of nuts and found the farmer asleep on his rock, with the stolen hamper beside him. The unfortunate man was taken prisoner and escorted back to town, where he was shut in a narrow prison. He wept, and marvelled that gentle deer could have betrayed him in such a wicked way.

He soon discovered that rats lived in his prison, and he began to hunt them. He had killed six when a snake crawled in through a hole and said:

"O farmer, I see misfortune has come upon you; I learned the news from deer, who told me to come here and do a certain thing. Give those rats to me, and I will help you."

"I will bite the chief's first son, and he will seem to die. When men think he is dead, take these three leaves and go to him. Place one in his nose, one in his mouth, and the other on his heart, and he will live again. Doubtless some reward will come to you."

The farmer gladly agreed to do these things, and snake went away. Soon after the farmer heard sounds of distress in the town, wailing and sounds ^{of} sorrow, and the man who brought him food explained that the chief's first son had died from the bite of a snake.

"I know something of these things," the farmer said. "Take me to the boy, and with magic I will heal him."

The chief was advised of the farmer's wish, and permitted him to go forth from the prison to the house where the dead boy

lay. The farmer made magic signs, then took his three leaves and placed one in the boy's nose, one in the mouth, and the third one over his heart; and while he was doing this he also prayed, for he feared to fail and die.

Life returned to the chief's first son; he arose and walked, and the town rejoiced. The noise of beating drums, and singing, and the sounds of revelry reached deer in his distant field, and he knew then the farmer would be safe, and well rewarded.

The happy chief gave wealth and high position to the poor and lowly farmer, and he lived in luxury until he died.

WHY SNAKES LIE ON THEIR BACKS TO DIE

J. Dennis

When hungry season came Spider went to Snake's town and begged for food. He knew that Snake had gathered a fine harvest of yans that year, and now Spider said to him:

"Snake, please give me yans to help my family in this time of hunger. For every yan you give me I shall give you two in return when my own fields are full."

"Then you may have as many as you need," Snake said, and Spider took as many as he could carry. He and his family fed on yans throughout the hungry season, then once again the fields were full and men and animals went forth to harvest crops.

Snake came one day to Spider for his yans; and when Spider saw him coming he made a plan. There was meat hanging in his house, and when Snake came inside Spider was careful to let him

CHAPTER XI THE GERO

see the meat.

"That is fine meat you have," Snake remarked. "I hope you will give me some, as well as my yans."

"Well, I may give you a little," said Spider, "But wait till I return. I am going outside."

He went outside. He climbed up on the roof, let down rope through a hole and caused it to fasten about the meat. He pulled up the meat and hid it, then climbed down to the ground. He found his wife talking with Tortoise.

"Come in," he said. "Snake is here. Let us have something to eat." Spider, his wife and Tortoise went inside and met Snake waiting there. "We are going to cook food to eat," said Spider, and began looking for the meat. It was not there. "Where is the meat?" he asked his wife. "Have you put it in another place?"

"I have not touched it."

"Tortoise, did you take my meat?"

"I am not a thief, like some other people whose names I will not mention," said Tortoise rather coldly. Spider turned to Snake.

"I think you have taken the meat, Snake. It was here when I left the house. And so were you, and you were looking at it."

Snake said he was innocent. Spider became thoughtful.

"I have a certain magic knife which possesses magic powers," he said. "It will soon discover who the guilty person is. All of you lay your necks upon this log; if you are not guilty no harm will come to you, but if one of you is the thief then he

will die."

Spider's wife obeyed. He ran the blunt edge of the knife across her neck, and she rose unharmed. Tortoise lay his neck across the log, although he protested at such foolishness, and he also was unharmed by the knife.

Snake's turn came. Spider now used the sharp edge of the knife and cut Snake's head off. Snake wriggled and writhed on the ground as he died, and turned his stomach upwards so that everyone might see his flat and empty belly and know his innocence.

Since that time all snakes have died with their stomachs turned upwards, to remind the world that they were once considered honourable people.

HOW AN UNNATURAL SON DESTROYED HIS FATHER'S TRIBE

T. Bracewell

I can tell a story of a wealthy chief who lived beyond the memory of men; his bodyguard was made of wise men and diviners. He had many wives, and all gave birth to children except one, so he summoned his wise men and diviners and commanded them to discover and remove the cause of this woman's barrenness. They read their sands, made medicine, and in time declared that the woman would conceive and bear a fully grown young man.

Even as they had said, this unnatural thing took place. When the young man was born he appeared before his father, saying:

"I am your son and yet not your natural son, for I came down from the heavens. My name is Kawa. Honour me, and I will serve you well."

But the chief and all his subjects feared Kawa, and the chief devised a plan to rid himself of this super-natural son. He called all his sons and ordered them to fetch certain bundles of thatch and put a new roof on his house, and one of these bundles was reserved for Kawa.

"Take that bundle," the chief commanded him, "and carry it to my house." Kawa agreed to do this, but standing at a distance from the bundle he announced in a bold voice that he would first test his new bow by shooting an arrow through the bundle. As soon as he uttered these words a warrior with a cutlass rushed forth from the bundle and dashed into the forest.

The chief's first plan had failed. He then made it known that a feast would be held in Kawa's honour; a deep pit was dug and covered with mats, and dancers danced about it. Kawa was asked to dance in the center, but he flung his spear through the central mat, saw that it disappeared in a hole beneath, and danced around the hole as the other dancers had.

The chief's second plan had failed. He now grew impatient and caused Kawa to be seized and bound, and tied inside a hamper. Men were appointed to carry him down to the river and throw him in, that he might drown; but on the way they paused to gather mushrooms. While they were at a distance a boat came by and saw that a man was inside the hamper.

"O man," he asked, "why are you tied inside the hamper?"

"A foolish question," Kawa said. "Surely you must know that this is the only way one may go to heaven without dying?"

The goat untied the hamper and begged to be put inside, so that he might go to heaven without dying. Kawa willingly allowed the foolish goat to take his place; he tied him securely inside the hamper and fled to a far country. The men threw goat in the river, and went back to the town to share the chief's rejoicing.

Kawa dwelt in a distant land for some time, and by the strength of his good heart and supernatural powers he gained great wealth. He returned to his own country with many slaves who bore his riches, and stood before the chief, his father, saying:

"O father, I am your son Kawa who died, and now I have returned. I have lived in the Land of Spirits, and the wealth there is so great I brought a handful of my goods for you to share. It is a land where hens lay pearls instead of eggs, where trees bear precious stones instead of fruit, and gold grows in the ground like carrots everynight and is harvested at dawn. There is no end to wealth and happiness in the Land of Spirits."

The chief was amazed to hear these things, and cast envious eyes on the riches his son had brought. Truly, he thought, the Lands of Spirits must be a fabulous place indeed. He decided he would visit this place himself, and his people begged that they might go with him. Thus the chief and all his people asked Kawa and his slaves to tie them inside hampers, and Kawa had

then carried to the river bank. Here he confessed that he had played them false in order to have revenge, and a great cry of wailing filled the air: but all the hampers were thrown into the river, and the wicked chief and his tribe were drowned.

WHY HUNTERS FEAR DJINN

L. McCoy

Djinn and his wife had their home among the mountains in the high forests, and they would permit no man to come there unless he was one of their family. Djinn was a fine hunter and had a quiver filled with poisoned arrows, but he did not hunt in the fashion common to mankind. If he chanced to see monkeys in a tree he would merely shoot at the tree, and soon enough the monkeys would be poisoned and fall down.

Anything that Djinn shot at always fell, and thus he was the most famous hunter in the land.

When his wife was expecting a child Djinn went out to hunt more frequently, that she might have the delicacies which the child in her desired; but so skillful was his hunting that animals were now difficult to find. One day he searched the forest from early morning until dusk, and found no meat at all; and as night was falling he came upon a man who had a deer. He politely asked the man for a little of the meat, but the man refused and went his way. Djinn went home empty-handed to his wife.

"Did you find nothing at all today?" she asked.

"Nothing at all," he said. "The forest is empty.

"Did you not even meet someone with meat?"

"Only a man with a deer, and he would give me nothing."

His wife was vexed.

"I believe you are not so clever as you used to be," she said. "In other days you would not have left a whole deer to one greedy man when your family was hungry, and come home empty-handed."

Djinn considered this. Next morning he tracked the hunter to his town, and when he arrived he asked for the man who had killed a deer the day before. Djinn was such a small fellow that no one took any notice of him, so he began smelling and sniffing from house to house and finally found the one he sought. He knocked on the door, and when the hunter came out Djinn attacked him. People were surprised to see this small Djinn attacking the town hunter, but when the hunter was overpowered and tied up in a hamper they became alarmed. As Djinn carried the hamper out of town spears and arrows followed him, but all were turned aside and Djinn escaped.

The town hunter was never seen again. Thereafter Djinn were feared and respected by the people, and whenever a hunter meets one he will give him half his meat.

EARLY HISTORY OF THE TCHIEN

The Tchien people, who belong to the Krhu Tribe of the Kru Group, were presumably one of the last migrating bands to arrive in the region now known as Liberia. They arrived on the northeastern edge of the land, and further progress was barred by tribes who had travelled ahead of them.

While in transit the Tchien paused for some time in what is now the French Ivory Coast, building towns on the Geber and Nzo Rivers; finally they pushed on to the mountainous rain forests among which the Gestos and Cavally Rivers find their source. In common with the other vigorous groups of warriors who invaded this section of the Guinea coast, the Tchien people came down fighting and, when they settled, had to continue fighting to survive; and the bloody inter-tribal feuds ceased only with the establishment and spread of the firm peace-making policies of the Liberian Government.

J. Wotto cites a typical example of life in that area many years ago.

In the Ivory Coast, and just across the northeast frontier of Liberia, there dwelt a warrior-chief of some renown called Zo. Zo fathered a son called Neneh, and the son of Neneh was Zoneneh Taayi, who became another mighty warrior-chief. Zoneneh was the leader of the Myobo Tribe, who were related to the Tchien, and when the French Government came to that place he was made paramount chief.

Zoneneh was a proud and war-like man, as were his warriors, and he was no man's servant; therefore he was at first surprised and then highly vexed when the chief of the French 'tribe' demanded that the Nyebos pay tax and tribute. At that time there were traders called Tobo abroad in the land, men who lived and traded under French protection and paid taxes to the French; and now Zoneneh, seeing the Tobo were friendly with the French, fell on them and destroyed them. He killed all the Tobos he could find, seized their goods, and with his people escaped across the border to Tchien. In the land of the Tchien he found refuge with a chief called Tailey Pah, in the town of Tailey Pah; he was well received and settled there.

Zoneneh's first son died soon after in this place, and was buried in the ground.

Three neighbouring tribes--the Gborbo, Gorbo and Kanna--objected to the presence of the Nyebos in Tchien territory; they feared Zoneneh's spears, and doubtless foresaw trouble with the powerful French. They demanded that Tailey Pah send Zoneneh back across the border to his own land. Tailey Pah invited the three tribes to sit in council with him for the purpose of discussing this important matter: but the three tribes refused the invitation and repeated their demands.

The Nyebo did not move, and Tailey Pah did not dare to ask them too; probably he was well content to have such formidable warriors at his side. The three dissenting tribes of the Gborbo, Gorbo and Kanna came together to decide what they should do, and sent one of their number to dig up the body of Zoneneh's

dead son. It is not known if they intended this as a declaration of war, or to destroy Zoneneh's affection for this land.

Zoneneh found the grave disturbed; the body of his son had disappeared, and he was extremely vexed. He assembled his warriors and went to war against the three hostile tribes, and in the ensuing battle his men were repulsed and he himself was severely wounded by a Kanna man called Galor Mayea. He asked the Tchien people to take him back to Tailey Pah: but instead they delivered him to the hands of the Kanna.

The Kanna took Zoneneh to their place, and he was badly treated. They hammered a long iron nail into his head, and he died.

Now, on the French side of the border there was a man called Gee. He was a relative of Zoneneh's, but had stayed behind when Zoneneh fled: and when he heard of his friend's cruel death he was angry, and swore he would revenge him. Gee gathered his own fighters, united with the Nyobo tribe, and went to war against the Gborbo, Gorbo and Kanna. The invaders swept through the land killing and burning and plundering, enslaved many of their enemies, then crossed back across the border to the Ivory Coast; and there they remained.

THE IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN

D. Harris

At the beginning of the world God made three men; he sent them to live on earth, and they dwelt in three different places.

One man became a hunter, the second was a traveller, and the third settled on good land and began a farm. After a time God summoned the three men to him, and said he would grant each of them one gift. He asked then what they wanted.

The hunter said he wished to have a dog, to help him hunt. The traveller wanted a horse. The farmer said he was lonely living by himself, and asked for a woman to keep his company and help him with his work. God granted these three gifts and the men returned to their homes.

The traveller rode his horse to many distant places and was quite often happy; and yet he felt his life was not complete. The hunter lived in the forest and hunted with his dog, and he also knew a measure of happiness--but he wondered why he sometimes felt sad and discontented. Both of these men decided to visit the farmer, who lived with his woman in a fertile place.

The hunter went with his dog, and the traveller rode his horse. They found the farmer at his home, living contentedly with his wife and two baby children who were his greatest treasures. The two visitors saw that the woman brought water, cut wood, cooked food and cared for the home and was always good and gentle; they realized too that with his family at his side the farmer was never lonely, and sadness was a stranger to his house. They admired the farmer's woman and small children, and knew they would also have to have such things if their lives were to be rich and filled with joy.

The hunter and the traveller went to God, and asked him to take the dog and the horse and give them women instead. God

changed the two beasts into women, so that the two men each had a wife.

The farmer's wife was a peaceful woman of good heart and with a will to work; she was the mother of all such women in the world.

The woman who came from the horse was greedy, willful, and could not be trusted; and she was the mother of all such women in the world today.

The woman who came from the dog was spiteful, noisy and always making palaver; and she let strange men follow her about. She was the mother of all such women in the world today.

HGW A BUSHDEVIL WAS DANCED TO DEATH

A bushdevil wandered through the forest until he came to a place where two paths crossed; and here he made his home. This was a bad thing for the people who used these paths, for bushdevils are wicked and devour human beings.

When anyone came to the crossroads the bushdevil would jump out of his hole in the ground, holding a drum under his arm. He would begin beating the drum, and command the wayfarer to dance.

"Dance, o man! Dance, and I will drum for you--and he who tires first must die!"

The unfortunate traveller, be he man or woman or child, would be obliged to dance a dance of death; for invariably the

dancer tired first, and was killed and eaten by the bushdevil. In a nearby town there were two twins; and as all men know, twins often have unusual powers. They make fine magicians and medicine men, they are wise in telling fortunes and know the use of herbs and poison. This pair of twins decided they would outwit and kill the bushdevil, who had killed many people from their town and they left their town one morning to see what they could do. One of them crept ahead softly, softly, and hid behind an anthill close to the bushdevil's hole and then his brother boldly approached singing a pleasant song.

The bushdevil heard him coming and jumped from his hold

"Ho! he cried in great delight. He had not seen a man for days. "Ho, young man. Come and dance for me!" Bushdevil began tampering excitedly with his drum.

"Thank you, sir," said the lad. "It is a fine morning for a dance--play on!"

The bushdevil threw back his head and laughed at such insolence.

"Do you know, youth, that the one of us who tires first must die?"

"Fine," said the twin. That means the other one will live." He danced and danced to the bushdevil's drumming, and when he was tired he skipped behind the anthill and his brother skipped out in his place. In this fashion the twins danced for three whole days; whenever one was dancing the other one was resting. The bushdevil was astonished to see, as he thought, one man dance on and on, day and night, and he himself grew tired. The twins

kept changing places. The bushdevil dropped, and wilted, and at last he fell exhausted on the ground.

The twins killed bushdevil by cutting off his head; they impaled the head on a stake and carried it into town, and there it stayed as a warning to all devils that twins lived in that place and would tolerate no wicked devilry.

EAGLE, DOO-DOO AND THE RICE BIRD

In other days Eagle, Doo-Doo and the Rice Bird were good friends, and they would build their nests close to each other. During hungry season Eagle called her two friends and said:

"Hungry time is with us again, and we three must work together if we are to find enough to eat, and raise our families as well. I suggest that we take turns in hunting food."

The two small birds nodded their agreement, for Eagle was a wise bird and they respected her judgment. But the little black and yellow Rice Bird remarked sadly:

"Eagle, your idea is good; but I am a small-small bird. When my turn comes to hunt for food how will I bring enough? I can barely keep my own family alive. Would it not be better if you search for food and I guard your eggs as well as mine?"

The Doo-Doo, who was only a little larger than Rice Bird, also said:

"Eagle, those are my words too. I am only a small-small

bird and would have no chance of finding food for three families. It would be better if I stayed with Rice Bird to guard your family while you hunt."

Eagle agreed to let the two small birds take turns in guarding her nest of eggs, but she reminded them that a large snake lived nearby.

"As fast as I lay my eggs this snake sneaks up and eats them," Eagle said. "I've just laid a new batch, and that old snake will try to get them too. But you keep watch, you two young birds, and I'll teach you a little song to sing whenever you find my nest in danger. No matter where I am I shall always hear this song and come at once. The song is this:

"Danger to your nest Eagle,
Come home to your nest, Eagle.

Come at once and swiftly or you'll lose your eggs."

Thereafter Eagle would go searching for food all through the day, and Doo-Doo and Rice Bird took turns at guarding her nest. Rice Bird was quick and intelligent, and several times her shrill voice brought Eagle home in time to save her eggs from the hungry snake; but Doo-Doo was an ugly and lazy bird with a blunt, cracked voice. When her turn came to guard Eagle's eggs she would sleep until the snake was just about to take the eggs, and only then would she awake and sing the eagle-song.

Three times Rice Bird warned her, but Doo-Doo took no notice.

One day when Eagle was hunting, and it was Doo-Doo's turn to watch the nest, the snake crawled up and swallowed all the eggs while Doo-Doo was asleep. As the snake was gliding away

Doo-Doo awoke. She found the eggs were missing and began to sing the eagle-song, but now it was too late.

Eagle flew in at great speed, and at a glance she saw her eggs had gone. For a little while she searched wildly under the tree and in the bushes, but in vain. She was so angry she forgot the friendship between herself and Doo-Doo--she swooped on her lazy friend and tore her to pieces.

From that day onward eagles have made war on doo-doo's, but they still love and protect the little black and yellow birds.

HOW FISHER-BIRD GAINED HIS COLOURS

One day a woman was gathering palm nuts in the forest when she fell from a tree and hurt herself so badly she could not walk. As she lay on the ground in pain Green Pigeon alighted on a nearby branch.

"Pigeon," cried the woman, "fly to my village and tell my people I lie here, hurt and unable to move."

"I am too busy," Green Pigeon answered, and flew away.

Hawk saw her lying there, and came close.

"Hawk," said the woman, "I give you these palm nuts. Eat them, and then go to my village and tell my husband to come. I have broken bones and cannot move."

Hawk ate the nuts, but then laughed and flew away, saying he had no time to carry messages for foolish women. Then Fisher-bird came. In those days he was a plain and ordinary

brown bird without any bright colours.

"I see you are hurt, woman," he said at once. And being a friendly creature he added: "I will fly to your village, and tell your people to come."

He flew to the village, and the woman's relatives came to fetch her. Some days later, when the woman was almost well again, Fisher-bird came to see how she was.

"O Fisher-bird," declared the grateful women, "you are the best and most courteous of birds. I shall give you colours befitting your noble heart, so that all men may know and love you."

With dyes she used for dyeing cloth she painted the delighted bird in royal colours of purple, emerald and blue, and Fisher-bird wears those colours to this day. But Hawk and Green Pigeon are hunted and killed.

HOW LEOPARD LOST HIS KINGDOM

Spider and Leopard lived in the same town, and each was ambitious to become chief; but when the time came for the animals to elect a leader they chose Leopard, for he was strong and war-like, as a chief should be.

Since Spider was one of the wealthiest animals in town, and was aware that Leopard walked at night in search of other people's food, he built a tall fence about his house to protect his goats and chickens. But every night one or two of his

CHAPTER XV THE TCHIEN

chickens or goats would disappear, and Spider wondered what he should do. He suspected Leopard of being the thief, but there was no way of proving it; so he decided he would hire a night-watchman, and hired Jackal. Spider wished to bring disgrace on Leopard, so he gave Jackal certain instructions and also a long sharp knife.

That night Jackal took the knife and hid in the shadows inside Spider's fence, and waited for the thief to come. Presently Leopard came and began sniffing along the fence. He kept on sniffing until he came to a place where a fat chicken was sleeping: then he put his paw through the fence, and as he did so Jackal swung his knife. He cut off Leopard's paw, and Leopard ran away.

Jackal took Leopard's paw to Spider; Jackal wanted to eat it, but Spider kept it and took it to the chief the next day. Chief Leopard sat in council gravely discussing important matters, carefully concealing the fact that he had lost one paw, and when Spider came he asked abruptly:

"What brings you, Spider?"

"O Chief, there is a thief who steals my goats and chickens every night."

"Then catch your thief, and leave us to consider more important things."

"Last night I caught his paw, O Chief. If you will surron all the village, we can soon discover who has lost a paw, and we will know that person is the thief."

Leopard trembled when he heard this. He thought of the disgrace, of the people mocking him, of the children making long fingers at him and laughing among themselves.

"Wait," he said. "I will call the village."

Leopard went outside. He ran into the forest and never returned; for all people knew that no chief can be a thief, and no thief can be a chief.

THE TALE OF DOVE AND THUNDERDEVIL

Dove and Thunderdevil were once the best of friends, but Dove could not understand why Thunderdevil never laughed. No matter how exciting and amusing the conversation might be, he would merely smile a little and then stop. Dove asked him what the reason was for this.

"I rarely laugh," Thunderdevil said, "because my laugh is coarse and much too noisy. If I laughed you would be terrified--you would think the world was bursting open."

"You are my friend," said Dove, "and I am your friend; I would be happy if you laughed."

Thunderdevil never laughed. There came a time when Dove invited him to dine in his home, and when preparing the meal he remembered he had a quantity of palrwine.

"Ha!" he thought. "If I can persuade Thunderdevil to drink palrwine, I'm sure I can make him laugh."

He brought the palmwine and poured it into an old cooling jar his grandmother had as a girl, and stirred it with a golden spear. Dove's grandfather had owned the golden spear, and with it he had conquered all his enemies.

On the appointed day Thunderdevil came; the two friends dined well, and made merry with large quantities of palmwine. The conversation became unusually exciting and amusing and Thunderdevil was happy with the wine. He eyed the gleaming golden spear and asked:

"Dove, where did you get that golden spear?"

"Oh, it belonged to my grandfather," Dove said proudly. "He made it out of pure gold and with it he conquered all his enemies."

The idea of a dove conquering anyone--and with a golden spear--was too much for Thunderdevil. He burst out laughing. The house exploded. Dove found himself enveloped in a violent blast of noise, and was hurled through the air to some distant place. He fell to earth in a foreign land and lay swooning on the ground for seven days.

From that time until now Dove has never built another house, and he has never talked again to Thunderdevil. All night and often during daylight hours he may be found on forest trails and roads, searching always and everywhere for his grandfather's golden spear.

The first part of the document is a letter from the Secretary of the State to the Governor, dated the 10th of the month. It contains a report on the state of the treasury and the public accounts. The Secretary states that the treasury is in a state of comparative health, and that the public accounts are in a state of order. He also mentions that the state has received a large sum of money from the sale of the public lands, and that this money has been used for the benefit of the state.

The second part of the document is a report on the state of the public lands. It contains a list of the lands that have been sold, and the amount of money that has been received from each sale. The report also mentions that the state has received a large sum of money from the sale of the public lands, and that this money has been used for the benefit of the state.

The third part of the document is a report on the state of the public accounts. It contains a list of the accounts that have been audited, and the amount of money that has been received from each account. The report also mentions that the state has received a large sum of money from the sale of the public lands, and that this money has been used for the benefit of the state.

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